

Minutes of Regional Advisory Council Meeting
Business, Marketing & Management and Communications & Information Technology
Tuesday, March 29, 2016

CTE Regional Advisory Leaders:

Jimmy Stroud, Business Teacher, Moderator

Loretta Burgess, Business Teacher, Minutes Recorder

Tammy Johnson, Business Teacher

Jimmy Stroud opened the session with introductions of panel members. Lana Garner, First Service Bank of Conway, Robin Hackett, First Service Bank of Greenbrier, Shawn Johnston and Shonna Battles of First Security Bank of Greenbrier, Dales James, Clinton Walmart Manager, Renea Davis Estes, F.L. Davis owner, Heber Springs, and Richard Standridge, owner of Aromatique, Heber Springs

Robin Hackett commented after the first question stating concerning soft skills that paying attention to detail was very important and what they look for in a prospective employee.

Jimmy Stroud asked "What type of technology skills are required in your workplace?" Technology is big. Math skills are needed but employees just need to be able to use a calculator. Having the knowledge of how to use a program, having computer skills, how to adapt, being able to use Microsoft and Excel. The ability to learn is key to success in the workplace Communication is key to success in banking industry. Customer service is a priority in the industry. It is all about building those relationships stated Mr. Standridge. Customer service is vital; basic computer skills are necessary.

The next questions asked was "In the banking industry, is training available?" A training program at First Security Bank is a five core program. Basic knowledge of excel is essential. The panel stressed that students learn about teamwork through extracurricular programs at the high school level. Being involved in organizations like FBLA, FACS, and FHA, trains students at the high school level of the importance of skills and working as teammates. The competitive events that each organization involve their students in is very beneficial to the students. It was stated that it is very important for students to have that feeling to be involved with teammates and groups.

What do you look for in a prospective employee? Walmart manager Dale James stated that he conducted over 1,000 interviews to hire 200 people. He stated that it does not take long to pick out the leaders that you hire. Future leaders are tapped from the cream of the crop. If they

come in already dressed by company dress code, it is a positive. 80% fail the mandatory drug test. He begins most of his interview sessions by telling the prospective employees that if you have taken drugs in the last six months, just excuse yourself. He stated that in one group of 25 individuals, only one person stayed after he made that statement. The more we can teach and train about drug use, the better off we can be.

Tammy Johnson, talks about how important it is to make sure that our kids know that is not acceptable to do drugs. Drug testing is going to be a part of permanent employment. They need to understand that in today's society this will be the norm and that drug testing will be done randomly after they are hired.

Social media is checked in background screening All members of the panel stated that they do check prospective employees social media. First Service Bank checks randomly. Major companies check social media. Students need to understand that posting or tweeting is publishing to the public. Their behavior and posting on social media will follow them for as long as the social media is available.

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“What is your reaction if the applicant does not have a social media footprint? All members of the panel stated and confirmed that background checks are done by every company on panel. Social media is used for marketing by many businesses. F.L. Davis Renea Estes commented that a lot of her employees need to be able to add or subtract in their head. Basic math skills are required for basic skill jobs. Decisions making is an important skill for the Aromatique owner.

Interviews in the classroom are essential to train the students what to expect when they interview for a job. “People just don't understand how important it is to dress appropriately for an interview,” was stated by the Walmart manager. He has had many applicants come in to apply at his store in dirty clothes or dressed in inappropriate apparel.

Social media should be treated just like work experience. If a large social media footprint is seen, it may not be a good thing. A question was asked, “ What major reason why you would not hire someone? Answers were many: Job history,first impression, lack of clean clothes, improper clothing, not being able to make eye contact.

It was stated that it is so important to be professionally dressed—dress for the job you want, not for the job you are applying for.

Most applicants are critiqued by the human resources department; some have applicants apply in person but most on the panel stated they take online applications for job vacancies.

Jim Brock, CTE state supervisor, stated that we do a good job in the business area teaching the skills needed. The problem is that we do not touch all the students. It was agreed by many business teachers in the afternoon session that is very important to have human resources manager interact with students and conduct interviews.

Suggestions from panel was to have mock interviews for students. Starting training as early as the eighth grade is important. Robin stated that she always asks what are your strengths and weaknesses in an interview and many times the applicants are not prepared to answer these questions.

Suggestions from the panel to the group of teachers and other participants were: Take the job shadow program seriously, role play jobs, teach realistic job duties and salary requirements, have a few employers visit schools in their junior year, etc.

J. Brock asked about the job market in the banking industry? Entry level job openings are available. Workforce is not showing that banking is in high demand. Not sure why?

Management, IT, are showing a need for. Data is skewed somewhat. Banking is a career for most people;

Accounting needs to be taught in every high school stated Jim Brock.

Business teachers have such high expectations; but that is a good thing. Business classes helped prepared students for college.

As educators if you can put more value on attendance, that would be vital. Walmart Mr. James

Time clocks are being used at UACCM; if a student is late for class by even one minute five points is deducted from their scores. It was noted that high schools would not be able to enforce such a policy.

Soft skills are the number one criteria that businesses are looking for in prospective employees. "All of the management team started at lower level positions for F.L. Davis" stated Renea Davis. Walmart manager shared with the group that he is a UACCM Alum. Students don't always need a four-year degree. The drive and knowledge was instilled in him after high school after he had worked in the real world for a period of time. He then realized that he needed to get more training and education.

A business teacher in the group asked the questions about technology: certifications importance? If on their resume they have the Microsoft Office Certification would it make the application more impressive? The answers were yes.

In the application process, do you check their credit background? It is in background check for most companies. Banks don't run a credit report before they hire someone but they can run one after they are hired if necessary.

What dismisses an employee? Performance issues and attendance; lack of detail; no get up and go.

Do you have a yearly evaluation? 90-day for entry level; annual for Walmart; F.L. Davis gives them an evaluation sheet and let's them judge themselves. Individual employee perceptions are completely different from the managers.

As time was running out, Jimmy Stroud, the moderator, thanked the panel of business members for taking time to share their thoughts and expertise with the group. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 by Jimmy Stroud. The group was dismissed to the auditorium for the closing session of the meeting.