




**Why an Integrated Communication Plan
for Workforce Boards is Critical Now**
Presentation for U.S. Conference of Mayors
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Why Communications Plan Critical **Now?**

Largest Monthly Jobless Rate Leap in
22 Years Recorded.

Substantial Job Loss Continues



Our Local Picture

Hartford's Population / Labor Force (2000-2005)

HARTFORD'S POPULATION:

- Declined by 10,475 (-8.6%)

HARTFORD'S LABOR FORCE:

- Overall labor force fell by 5,650 (-11.8%)



**MANY US URBAN CITIES FACING SIMILAR
DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

CT DOL Labor Market Analysis (February 2006)





Some Supply Side Concerns

(in North Central CT)

- Our Workforce is Aging
- Our Prime Target is Leaving the State
- Our Future Workforce WILL come from our Cities
- Educational Indicators are Alarming
- Experience with our Justice System on the Increase
- North Central CT is the most challenged region in the state

***This is not just a challenge
it is a catastrophe.***



Some Demand Side Concerns

- **Present Economic Recession Cyclical**
- **Labor Shortage**
- **Decline in Skills Attainment**
- **Immigration**
- **Specific Job Shortages** – i.e. Healthcare-nursing, Manufacturing-machinists and engineers, trucking-drivers, and insurance/finance-actuarial
- **Big Demand Growth Fields in CT** – IT, Teachers, Bioscience Professionals, Nursing and Technical Healthcare, Engineers and Machinists.
- **Future Job Competencies even More Technical than Ever**





Challenges

Workforce development-related challenges include:

- high cost of living
- high housing costs
- educational shortfalls
- language barriers
- “brain drain” of young workers
- generational gaps of older / younger workers
- employing the underutilized population segments





Why Communications Plan

Critical **NOW?**

- Government freezing budgets – June 17th headline in CT “**Rell orders spending freeze for all state agencies**”
- What are the headlines in your state?





In a Nutshell



Demand for services **increases**

while

resources continue to **decrease.**



Brand or Be Branded



- The WDC needs to position itself and help the Workforce Investment “system” needs to have it be a “brand driven” business.
 - **be understood** (key messages for key audiences)
 - **be the Workforce Development “Go To” Expert in each community**
 - **obtain needed funding and other leveraged resources**



Brand or Be Branded

(continued)



- The WDC needs to position itself and help the Workforce Investment “system” needs to have it be a “brand driven” business.
 - **collaborate better with economic development and education systems**
 - **be effective – measurable impacts**



Communications Plan Needs to be VISIONARY

■ Needs to:

- **Un-complicate** - the complicated
- **Eliminate old perceptions of too much bureaucracy** – we're a lean, mean, working machine
- **Squash old memories of historical ineffectiveness** – many proven results to share
- **Remove “Social Agency” stigma** – Today's needs are far broader (*especially related to economic competitiveness*)



Communications Plan Needs to be OPPORTUNISTIC

■ Needs to:

- **Express expertise** - common knowledge, shared intelligence and best practices
- **Seek out new ideas** and streamlined approach for greater impact on more diverse groups of customers
- **Attain leadership** in economic development and education initiatives
- **Encourage new resources**





Communications Plan Needs to be **FLEXIBLE YET CONSISTENT**

■ Needs to:

- **Adjust Message to Audience** - common messaging customized by audience “care-about” – i.e. slightly different for businesses, funders, job seekers, elected officials, etc.





Communications Plan Needs to be HEARD

■ Needs to:

- **Have solid set of strategies and tactics** -
i.e. information kits, common website, new events, media outreach
- **Be measurable** – identify ways to measure plan effectiveness





Summary

- Now more than ever, the USCM WDC needs an Integrated Communications Plan
- Branding will be a critical contributor to our effectiveness with that Plan
- We need to be visionary
- We need to be opportunistic
- We need to be flexible yet consistent
- We need to be heard





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THANK YOU

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