OBION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN
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1. PLAN PURPOSE

The Obion County Joint Economic Development Council along with partners has developed an action plan to enhance Obion County’s competitive advantages for workforce and marketing of those advantages.

Why this work is important to Obion County focuses on our future – the future of our economy and the future of our youth. We are all working diligently to create a good place to live and work. We are working hard to make Obion County a place abundant with opportunities where our youth can enjoy worthwhile and fulfilling careers. We understand that it is important to change the stigma of jobs in Obion County. By sharing positive stories, we will build momentum and compound interest in what is happening throughout our county. We also know that all local organizations have limited resources so it is important and useful to leverage existing resources; we can accomplish more by working smartly together.
II.  PLANNING PROCESS

This action plan was developed with the active involvement of over 30 people. A complete list of participants is presented in the Acknowledgements section.

Planning was efficient in six work sessions facilitated by Allison Larsen, Principal of TadZo.

- **Employer Focus Group** - We began by hearing from local employers about their challenges and what they want from Obion County.
- **Obion County Skills Pipeline Work Session** involved a wide variety of service providers for training and education resources available for Obion County residents and employers.

These two work sessions provided informative insights to the Obion County Workforce Team Planning Work Session where priorities for this Workforce Development Action Plan were formulated and prioritized.
- **Obion County Workforce Team Planning Work Session** – Discussion and planning focused on meeting the current and future needs of local industry as well as ways to inspire youth to prepare for current and future jobs in Obion County.
III. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Obion County’s priority initiatives for this Workforce Development Action Plan focus on three important areas:

1. Cataloging careers in Obion County
2. Available childcare “24X7”
3. Young Professional engagement in Obion County Workforces Development

Work sessions were held to go deeper for each of these areas and are the basis for this action plan.

CATALOGING CAREERS

Local employers, education and other workforce service providers worked together to develop an action plan for cataloging careers available in Obion County.
**What are we trying to achieve?**
Increase awareness of career opportunities available in Obion County to connect jobs seekers to opportunities and inspire youth so that they understand the opportunities to have a fulfilling career in their hometown.

**Why important?**
Obion County employers are growing. New businesses are coming to town and growing too. Meanwhile, a large segment of the Obion County workforce are baby boomers approaching retirement. All this success could lead to constrained economic growth if local employers cannot find talent to support this growth.

Employers and economic development/workforce partners understand that if youth and job candidates understood the full career potential – not just job openings - available in Obion County, they may be more interested in pursuing local employment. Many examples exist in Obion County where a current manager started on the “shop floor” so to speak – from entry-level to top management.

**What steps will we take?**
1. Assemble implementation team
   a. Define roles
   b. Define ask of employers
   c. Define format and collection method and tools
2. Participating industries/local employers
   a. Create target list
   b. Segment list for outreach
   c. Ask for employer participation, defining the value to employers for participating
3. Inventory available information on Obion County jobs/careers
4. Define questions for catalogue information to gather, such as:
   a. Positions
   b. Career pathways
   c. Current openings
   d. Salaries and benefits for each position
   e. Education requirements for each position
   f. Hiring process (company-specific)
   g. How employed – via temp agency or direct
   h. Verify inventory of available information (from step 3)
   i. Request permission to use information in career catalogue
5. Capture information via collection method
a. Organize
   b. Verify

6. Awareness & promotion of information
   a. Target audience: high school students, unemployed, underemployed, employed workers – both internal and external to Obion County
   b. Publish “catalogue”
   c. Website
   d. Video
   e. Personal stories/case studies
   f. Social media
   g. Local newspaper features
   h. Share with local school districts
   i. Link with “Your Future” Fair – YP

7. Define process to update catalogue and corresponding schedule to maintain current information

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT?

- **Lead:** Obion County Chamber of Commerce
- **Team:** WIOA (M. Prater), industry/HR reps, CenterPoint Business Solutions, UT Martin internship participants, UT Martin College of Business, Jeff Nicks, UT Martin Career Planning, Young Professional Andrew Gibson (Discovery Park), Kim Kee (West TN Industrial Association)

WHAT RESOURCES MAY BE AVAILABLE?

- Existing Industry survey information
- WIOA data

TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2Q18</th>
<th>3Q18</th>
<th>4Q18</th>
<th>1Q19</th>
<th>2Q19</th>
<th>3Q19</th>
<th>4Q19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assemble team</td>
<td>Launch development of survey</td>
<td>Information collected from employers</td>
<td>Launch website</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Process Metrics</strong></th>
<th><strong>Outcome Metrics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Survey tool designed</td>
<td>✓ Website analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ 100% targeted employer participation</td>
<td>✓ Social media analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Completed catalogue of careers</td>
<td>✓ Media hits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Case studies documented in video or writing</td>
<td>✓ Increase in candidates applying to local employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Website launched with complete information (might be additional pages to Chamber website instead of separate website)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Obion County Workforce Development Action Plan
**CHILDCARE**

A productive planning session with local employers and childcare experts assembled to lay out steps for this important initiative as documented in the following chart:
WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?
Quality childcare services available “24X7” to address gaps in service during second and third shifts as well as weekends.

WHY IMPORTANT?
Obion County employers are challenged with finding workers for second and third shift because candidates cannot secure childcare during these hours. Of all issues identified, the issue of available childcare ranked highest by employers as to what they would like assistance in solving. By offering continuous childcare 24 hours a day, seven days a week, there is an opportunity to grow the workforce which is in high demand by Obion County employers.

WHAT STEPS WILL WE TAKE?
1. Document current childcare services available in Obion County
   a. Number of facilities
   b. Capacity
   c. Hours of service
   d. Contact information
   e. Document Boys & Girls Program/facility/services
   f. Document Headstart resources/services
2. Survey the actual need
   a. Create survey for employers
   b. Make ask of employers to participate in survey
   c. Create survey of employees/employee candidates
   d. Engage Job Center, CenterPoint and other staffing agencies, etc. to assist with employee-focused survey
   e. Determine how to administer and tabulate survey
   f. Convert data to financial business case regarding business opportunity
3. Research who has done this before
4. Find resources for childcare initiatives
   a. Investigate incentives for creating
   b. Investigate foundations and grants available
   c. Investigate potential employer resources
   d. Investigate eldercare opportunities to leverage
5. Explore interest of existing childcare providers
   a. Present business case/business opportunity to existing childcare providers
   b. Boost certification rating of existing childcare providers and market within Obion County
   c. Explore opportunities with “in-home childcare”
6. Explore opportunity to leverage after-school facilities
a. Talk with school board
b. What may be possible for summer and school breaks

7. If existing service providers are not interested in expansion, present business opportunity to prospective entrepreneurs via these programs:
   a. Free childcare training available through DHS “Orientation”
   b. TN Early Childhood Training Alliance
   c. Dyersburg State AA Degree in childcare
   d. TN SBDC

8. Investigate spaces for facility, i.e. Job World, Vanity Fair Building

9. Document resources for parents (employees) to use childcare
   a. Childcare facilities and programs (childcare companies, Headstart, Boys & Girls Club)
   b. Funding to cover cost of childcare

10. Market childcare resources
    a. Inventory of childcare resources – existing and new (developed out of this initiative)
    b. New resources and services
    c. Honor childcare providers – recognition, case studies/feature stories. Not only will this raise awareness of what is available it will honor the profession to support the growth and continue service that is vital to talent pool expansion in Obion County.

Who will implement?

- **Lead**: Obion County Chamber?
- **Team**: Tyson, Baptist Hospital, William Sausage, Carey Counseling, Pathways, SNAP, DHS, UT Martin, Angie Fitzgerald

What resources are available?

- Promethean “Pro Kids”
- DHS website
- Laimer
- Kirkland
- “Bright Horizons”
- TACEE
- CCR&R
- Linked-In groups
- WIOA/ Jobs Center
- LAMAR
- Radio/news Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

**Timeline**
### Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process Metrics</th>
<th>Outcome Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Completed inventory of current childcare services</td>
<td>✓ Expansion of childcare services — to what degree documented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Employer survey completed and analyzed</td>
<td>✓ Employer survey of satisfaction — did we accomplish what we set out to do (i.e. more people are available for work second/third shifts and weekends because more childcare is available)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Employee/candidate survey completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Business Case prepared for business opportunity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Example research completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Research of funding resources completed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Outreach to existing childcare service providers completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Outreach for entrepreneur completed, if needed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Market childcare facilities, services, etc.</td>
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“YOUR FUTURE” FAIR

A small gathering of Young Professionals of Obion County members met for a working lunch meeting and quickly developed ideas that inspired action. The outcome of that meeting was captured in this chart:

![Chart showing ideas for "YOUR FUTURE" FAIR]

- **Student Volunteers (i.e., Community Service Hours)**
  - Work side by side (i.e., help put on the Job Fair)
- **Teacher Connections** to incorporate into classroom
- **Community Outreach Committee**
  - Whole group
- **Career Job Fair**
- **Middle School/HS**
- **Career catalogues**
- **Testimonials/stories of successful Obion Co. residents/work your way up**
- **Speed dating** with videos
- **Young Professionals**
  - **Relate best to students**

**Assets to Obion County**
WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?
Host a career fair that increases awareness of career opportunities in Obion County and connects youth with Young Professionals.

WHY IMPORTANT?
Young professionals in Obion County have a unique opportunity to connect with, and positively influence, youth in Obion County. These professionals can relate to what motivates youth in how they approach opportunities in Obion County and conducting marketing or outreach on these topics with youth. At the same time, students appreciate speaking and working with professionals who are closer to their own age. Students can earn community service hours for helping to put on event. Not only does the work benefit Obion County employers it can also benefit the YP organization as a pipeline for growing membership over time.

WHAT STEPS WILL WE TAKE?
1. Discuss with YP Community Outreach Committee. Confirm interest and role.
2. Engage other interested YP members and partners in planning session to define scope of event.
3. Define specific steps to host event
4. Determine who will do what by when
5. Structure regular check-ins to keep planning on track for a successful event
6. Document success and communicate in local media
7. Review and debrief on event – how can you make better for follow year?

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT?
- **Lead**: Young Professionals of Obion County (Community Outreach Committee)
- **Team**: Obion County Chamber of Commerce, School District, local employers

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?
- TBD

**Timeline**

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<th>4Q17</th>
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## Metrics

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<tr>
<th>Process Metrics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ # “Your Future” Fairs held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ # students participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ # parents participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Growth in participation overtime (year to year)</td>
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</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A wide range of organizations and people were involved in the planning process. It is because of the sincere input and efforts put forth from these people that we are able to work creatively and strategically to address challenges limiting the talent potential for growing our economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicky Thomas</td>
<td>Baptist Hospital</td>
<td>Margaret Prater</td>
<td>NW TN Workforce Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skipper Bondurant</td>
<td>Baptist Hospital</td>
<td>Lauren Tanner</td>
<td>Obion County JEDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott McClellan</td>
<td>Green Plains</td>
<td>Lindsay Frilling</td>
<td>Obion County JEDC</td>
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<td>Jennie Overall</td>
<td>MIA Seating</td>
<td>Van Wylie</td>
<td>Small Business Development Center</td>
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<td>LaShonda Cook</td>
<td>Tyson Foods</td>
<td>Janna Hellums</td>
<td>State of TN ECD</td>
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<td>Jack Horton</td>
<td>Tyson Foods</td>
<td>Chuck Marquis</td>
<td>Tennessee Valley Authority</td>
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<td>Emily Billingsley</td>
<td>Williams Sausage</td>
<td>Tracy Boucher</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of NWTN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Terri Maddox</td>
<td>Dyersburg State Community College</td>
<td>Frankye Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Kimberly Martin</td>
<td>Dyersburg State Community College</td>
<td>Martha Herndon</td>
<td>Promethian Foundation</td>
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<td>Ricky Boyd</td>
<td>Obion County Commission</td>
<td>Angie Fitzgerald</td>
<td>Job World</td>
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<td>George Leake</td>
<td>Obion County School System</td>
<td>Andrew Gibson</td>
<td>Discovery Park of America</td>
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<td>Donnie Walton</td>
<td>TN College of Applied Technology</td>
<td>Stacey Haynes</td>
<td>JD Distributors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Nicks</td>
<td>TN College of Applied Technology</td>
<td>Cody Martin</td>
<td>Edmaiston-Mosley Funeral Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wes Kennedy</td>
<td>Union City School System</td>
<td>Lane Archie</td>
<td>Thunderbolt Broadcasting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erica Bell</td>
<td>University of TN-Martin</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Watts</td>
<td>Center Point Business Solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackie Sand</td>
<td>NW TN Reconnect</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn McBride</td>
<td>NW TN Reconnect</td>
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The Obion County Workforce Development Action Plan for the Obion County Joint Economic Development Council was developed with the assistance and facilitation of TadZo.

TadZo is an economic development and site selection consulting firm led by Allison Larsen. Businesses and communities want essentially the same things: economic vitality, wealth creation, quality place and environment. TadZo works with communities to achieve these outcomes. TadZo also assist companies to identify communities with these attributes that support business strategy and competitive advantage.

Allison Larsen, CEcD
Principal
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