

# Action Item

## **FLORIDA WORKFORCE SYSTEM STATEWIDE BRANDING INITIATIVE BRAND STRATEGY RECOMMENDATION**

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Demand-driven and business-led, the Florida Workforce System is nationally recognized for innovative strategies. Through research-based strategic market analysis and collaborative input from stakeholders throughout Florida, the system is now developing recommendations and a plan for a new, statewide universal brand identity that conveys and promotes a comprehensive, unified and aligned system of world-class services for job seekers, workers and businesses.

More than 1,500 workforce system leaders, staff and stakeholders, including Florida consumers and employers, have contributed to the research and development of a new unified brand since the project officially launched in November 2012. Florida has an opportunity to lead the nation by being the first state to align its state board, 24 regional workforce boards and one-stop career centers around a single identity. Other state workforce systems such as Ohio and Virginia have indicated they are monitoring Florida's work. Several states including Texas, Kentucky, South Carolina, Illinois and California have implemented single or co-brand strategies. Texas, for example, brands its 28 local workforce development boards and more than 200 career centers as Workforce Solutions.

The work to develop brand strategy recommendations for the Florida Workforce System is being led by Workforce Florida Inc., its Chairman Dwayne Ingram, board and President/CEO Chris Hart IV as well as the branding consulting team IDEAS of Orlando. Regional workforce partners as well as the Department of Economic Opportunity have been involved at every stage. Workforce Florida also has collaborated with other statewide public-private partners such as Enterprise Florida Inc. and Visit Florida to enhance opportunities for strategic brand alignment by sharing information such as research and brand standards.

The project has two primary phases: Research and Engagement and Brand Development and Implementation and Outreach Planning. (A short outline of the major project activities to date also is included in this packet.)

Why has the state embarked on this workforce branding initiative?

- First, it's required by law. The Regional Workforce Boards Accountability of 2012, which was approved by the Florida Legislature, signed by Governor Rick Scott, and took effect on July 1, 2012, calls for the development of a single, statewide workforce brand. The law is consistent with the Governor's focus on making state government and their publicly funded entities more efficient and effective.
- Second, with myriad workforce system brands (local and state), there is a high lack of awareness and little clarity regarding publicly funded workforce services in Florida and the entities that comprise the state system. Brand research indicates a vast opportunity to address market confusion through a cohesive and consistent identity and brand architecture. Also the results of recent market testing for proposed name and logo concepts indicate prospective new names would begin to address some of the misperceptions about the system's access to and assistance with talent ranging from entry-level to professional.
- Investments in a unified brand identity also will allow for greater leveraging of outreach resources by Florida's 24 regional workforce boards and the state board and should result in future efficiencies. The opportunities to realize efficiencies and increase awareness among prospective customers — employers and job seekers — are especially critical now as Florida's, mostly federally funded, system again confronts the issue of declining funding, a trend expected to persist as the economy continues to improve.

Brand research by Team IDEAS underscores the need for brand clarity and much can be learned from the findings to not only support brand building for the workforce system but also service improvements. This research is being shared systemwide.

Key findings in a statewide employer survey indicate that:

- Among a randomly selected sample of employers, only a quarter are aware and knowledgeable of the workforce system.
- Consistent with the lack of knowledge, 52 percent say they aren't sure if the system is effective or not.
- Consistent with findings in a consumer survey of job seekers and employed workers, most employers think the system exists to assist unskilled job seekers and does not provide quality candidates.
- In contrast, among a sample of employers who were recommended by regional workforce boards, these businesses have a high likelihood to use the system in the

future, although 14 percent indicated they will not. Satisfaction ratings for those who have used local workforce services is high.

- Whether internally referred or randomly chosen to participate in the survey, those businesses that said they are not likely to use the workforce system in the future cite two main reasons:
  - Belief that the system is not a reliable source for the type job candidates and employees they are seeking; or
  - They or someone they know had an unfavorable prior experience in which they were sent unqualified candidates.
- Worth noting is that the lack of knowledge and awareness not only reaffirms the need for a unified brand, but represents tremendous opportunity to introduce or reintroduce the system's services to Florida businesses.

Among key findings in the statewide survey of consumers, including Floridians who are not employed and seeking a job, underemployed or gainfully employed:

- More than half of Floridians have name awareness, but most are not knowledgeable about any workforce system entities including the one-stop career center or regional workforce boards in their communities; the Employ Florida Marketplace at [EmployFlorida.com](http://EmployFlorida.com); Workforce Florida; or the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.
- The most recognizable of the state workforce system entities, as would be expected, are the career centers and [EmployFlorida.com](http://EmployFlorida.com).
- Developing a positive identity among job seekers, under-employed, and employed Floridians, who act as referring agents for those seeking to go to work, should be a key focus of the workforce system.
- The workforce system is largely perceived to be a resource to help less educated and less skilled workers find work.
- Most are either not sure of the effectiveness of the system or perceive it to be ineffective.
- Most college educated and professional people do not see the system as being relevant to them.

In both instances, these findings provide important lessons and highlight opportunities for a new unified brand. Among them, it is important that the new brand, which is much more than just a new name and logo:

- Show relevance to all Florida residents seeking employment, including educated professionals and highly skilled workers.

- Be easily identifiable as a unique entity that is separate from other “government” organizations such as state, county and city offices and that it not be perceived as the unemployment office.
- Compete and compare favorably to highly used and trusted websites such as Monster.com and CareerBuilder.com in terms of functionality, pertinent job prospects and leads.
- Align the system’s brand promise to the quality and consistency of products and services delivered by all locations and touch points.
- Build positive word-of-mouth through successful placement of qualified individuals.

Both quantitative and qualitative research was used to develop recommendations. Internal workforce system culture, perspectives, “stories” and input were extensively gathered and analyzed through a series of opportunities that included Culture Mapping™ and StoryJam™ sessions (which are similar to focus groups), one-on-one interviews with regional workforce board chief executives and local board and one-stop center visits as well as a brand audit of workforce system’s in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky and Texas. Workforce Florida Board members also contributed to this work. In many cases, workforce professionals, volunteer board leaders and partners — local and state — had multiple opportunities to engage.

The brand strategy recommendations (a unified brand charter, nomenclature and logo) being advanced to the board are a culmination of this work. While this significant undertaking has benefited from the involvement of many leaders across the state, the leadership and support of Workforce Florida partners including Florida Workforce Development Association President Richard Williams, who also is the Executive Director of the Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board, and the Branding Advisory Panel made up of regional workforce board chief executives, communications directors and business services liaisons as well as a leader from the Department of Economic Opportunity have been particularly instrumental. (See the attachment for an advisory panel membership list.)

While the unified brand is represented by the charter, nomenclature and logo, which will be considered by the Workforce Florida Board, it embodies so much more. The Florida Workforce System brand “lives” in the experiences and perceptions of its customers, prospective customers, partners, stakeholders — and the public — and is indelibly linked to its ability to deliver on its brand promise every day.

The proposed brand strategy for a unified brand for the Florida Workforce System is market-driven, customer-focused and will deliver consistency across the state — with local adaptability. It will not impose operational constraints on regional workforce boards, which

will continue to exercise local flexibility in their strategy, policy and program development to respond to the unique needs of their communities.

The proposed brand charter is included in this packet. Five brand names and a series of logo concepts were market tested among 150 Florida employers and 400 consumers. The recommended brand name and logo overwhelmingly received the most favorable endorsement from the marketplace. The research results and staff recommendations will be fully presented during the board's quarterly meeting.

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### **Needed Action**

**Approve the brand charter, nomenclature and logo to establish a new statewide unified brand for the Florida Workforce System that, through implementation, will establish a new, aligned universal brand identity for Workforce Florida Inc., all of Florida's regional workforce boards and one-stop career centers.**



## **Branding Advisory Panel Members**

*Workforce Florida Inc. would like to thank the following leaders for their exemplary and ongoing contributions to the Florida Workforce System Branding Initiative:*

### **Regional Workforce Boards Chief Executives**

- **Rick Beasley**, Executive Director, South Florida Workforce
- **Rick Fraser**, President, Center for Business Excellence
- **Pamela Nabors**, President & CEO, Workforce Central Florida
- **Kim Tesch-Vaught**, Executive Director, FloridaWorks

### **Regional Workforce Boards Communications Directors**

- **Laura Byrnes**, Communications Manager, Workforce Connection
- **Candace Moody**, Vice President of Communications, WorkSource
- **Tom Veenstra**, Director, Corporate Communications and Information Technology, Workforce Alliance

### **Regional Workforce Boards Business Services Directors**

- **Judy Blanchard**, Industry Relations Director, Brevard Workforce
- **Kenny Griffin**, Business Services Coordinator, Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board

### **Florida Department of Economic Opportunity**

- **Lois Scott**, Program Manager, Division of Workforce Services, Department of Economic Opportunity

## **BRANDING INITIATIVE TIMETABLE AT-A-GLANCE**

### **NOVEMBER 2012** *(Phase 1 Research and Engagement)*

- Project Launch and Beginning of Field Inquiry/Workforce Florida Quarterly Board Meeting

### **DECEMBER 2012**

- Culture Mapping™ Sessions
  - 10 destinations, 27 two-hour sessions, workforce leaders, professionals, partners and customers\*
- Launch Consumer Awareness and Perception Survey
  - 593 Floridians

### **JANUARY 2013**

- Story Jam™ Sessions
  - 60 leaders; two, daylong workshops
- Brand Audit
  - 16 regional workforce board chief executive interviews; five-state review (Florida, Georgia, Texas, Alabama, Kentucky); U.S. Department of Labor interview
- Branding Research Briefing
  - Workforce Florida, Enterprise Florida and Visit Florida

### **FEBRUARY 2013**

- Research Reports Completion and Workforce Florida Board Presentation of Findings
  - Culture Mapping™; StoryJam™; Consumer Survey; Brand Audit
- Launch Employer Awareness and Perception Survey
  - 101 Employers

*\* The final Culture Mapping Session was conducted on Feb. 5, 2013, in Homestead.*

**MARCH 2013** *(Phase 2 Brand Development, Implementation and Outreach Planning)*

- Brand Charter and Nomenclature Development
- Branding Advisory Panel Formation *(panel meets twice monthly via webinar and teleconference with Workforce Florida's Branding Project Team)*
  - Regional Workforce Board Executive Directors, Communications Directors, Business Liaisons and the Department of Economic Opportunity

**APRIL 2013**

- Brand Visual Identity Development
- Branding Initiative Update Webinar for Florida Workforce System Leaders
- Nomenclature and Logo Market Testing
  - 150 Employers; 400 Florida residents
- Brand Architecture Development
- Presentation of Employer Research, Nomenclature and Logo Concepts to Statewide Business Liaisons Workshop

**MAY 2013**

- Brand Recommendations to the Workforce Florida Board

**JUNE 2013**

- Brand Standards
- Implementation and Outreach Plan

**JULY 2013-JUNE 2014**

- Transition and Implementation Begins with Internal Preparation; Public Roll-out Target Date To Be Determined



## PROPOSED

# FLORIDA WORKFORCE SYSTEM UNIFIED BRAND CHARTER

Created by those who work within the system – and guided by those for whom the system is designed to serve – the Brand Charter captures the organization's brand by articulating its values, vision, mission, essence, position, promise, platform, personality and pillars.



**VALUES** are the **unswerving core beliefs** and spiritual foundation of the system. These values express the things about the Florida Workforce System brand that won't change over time; they are the bedrock and are embraced by the entire organization and everyone doing business with it.

- **Business-Driven:** We believe Florida employers – the state's job creators – are essential to our overall success in providing effective, market-relevant workforce solutions that drive economic growth and sustainability.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Driven by our commitment to excellence, we respond to changing market dynamics. We continually strive to improve our performance to better anticipate and address the talent needs of employers and the employment and skills needs of job seekers and workers. We identify, measure and replicate success.
- **Integrity:** We fulfill our mission with honesty and accountability and strive in every decision and action to earn and protect the public trust.
- **Talent Focus:** We believe in the power of talent to advance every enterprise and open the door to life-enhancing economic opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities. Our commitment is to make talent Florida's key competitive asset.
- **Purpose-Driven:** Our work is meaningful and through it, we can inspire hope, achievement and economic prosperity in the lives of the customers we serve.


**VISION** is a **"to be" statement for the system**. A simple, clear description of our compelling aspiration. The brand vision is intentionally aspirational; it is high-reaching and reflective of a goal not only for the system but for everyone it touches.

Florida will be the global leader for talent.

**MISSION** is a **succinct description of the work we will do** to achieve the vision. This is what we get up every day thinking about. It directly informs our structure, staffing and design of our operations and is the most visible to the market.

The Florida Workforce System connects employers with qualified, skilled talent and Floridians with employment and career development opportunities to achieve economic prosperity.





**ESSENCE is the emotional component of the brand** and captures what we want employers and job seekers to feel about us, voiced in their first person. It's the feeling we want people to have when they think of the Florida Workforce System.

**Employer** – "I have a partner who understands my business and is consistently focused on my success. This partner speaks my language, understands my industry and plays an integral role in developing and sustaining my greatest asset — my workforce. I value and trust this partner and tell others to do the same."

**Job Seeker/Worker** – "I know that I am supported by professionals who believe my success and career advancement are their highest priorities. They are knowledgeable, compassionate and action-oriented. Their expert guidance is always delivered with dignity and respect."

**POSITIONING is what we want said about us** and how we want to be positioned in the marketplace. Brand positioning keeps us on course and clear about the experience we create for employers and job seekers.

Florida's Workforce System is an essential catalyst for the state's Talent Supply System and a recognized and relevant resource for business.

The system is driven by both private-sector and public-sector leadership to respond to the employment and training needs of businesses, job seekers and workers.

Along with partners in industry, education, economic development and community development, workforce leaders and professionals seek to align the talent development needs of Florida businesses and job seekers, cultivate a highly skilled workforce, and provide access to training, education, employment and career advancement opportunities for Floridians.

**PROMISE is the implicit contract** between the Workforce brand and the job seeker, employer or stakeholder. It's clear, concise and unique to Florida's Workforce system. It is a basis for making deliverable decisions: at each key decision point, we should ask; "Does this deliver on our promise?"

Florida's Workforce System promises a dedicated team of professionals who possess an understanding of your needs. Uniquely positioned, we offer assets, expertise and effective partnerships to deliver seamless and efficient services, demonstrate our value to all customers through results and drive economic priorities through talent development.

**PLATFORM is the "Big Idea"** for the brand; not the ad copy, but what it points to.

World-Class Talent Development to Meet Current and Future Needs of Florida Employers

**PERSONALITY** is our brand's attitude, style and voice as stated in its own first-person voice.

I am confident in my ability to make a positive contribution to Florida businesses and a significant difference in the lives of the job seekers and workers I serve. My work is important and I approach it with respect and passion.

I am driven by the opportunity to link employers with people who can make them successful and profitable. I have extensive experience and know how to get things done.

I understand the industries I serve and recognize the varying needs and expectations of companies doing business here. My network of relationships with educational institutions as well as economic development and community organizations make me a well-informed, high-performance partner. I will not stop until I have filled the last open position and helped every job seeker find meaningful employment.

Though I am part of a unified workforce system, which brings greater clarity and visibility to those seeking to connect with me, I am empowered to customize strategies and solutions that address unique workforce challenges and needs.

I believe in my contributions to our economy and know that if I am doing my job well, Florida will be more competitive and a top destination for business.

**PILLARS** are solid, defined concepts that support the brand. Action-oriented, these words galvanize the system behind the brand and tell us how to deliver on our promises.

Collaborate – Innovate – Lead

