



The first quarter has come and gone. It really seems as if the year has but started. The major focus this year will be two fold out reach to consultants and trades shows and concentration on workforce and training.

Not surprising the number one concern nationwide is the lack of labor. This is not only the lack of labor but the lack of skilled labor. We are in a unique situation in West Plains. We have the training facilities but we are suffering from lack of people to take advantage of opportunity. We are a "Work Ready" community and those who have taken the time to test generally do well.

What this gives us is the ability to show prospects at what STEMs level our job candidates are capable. However, generally speaking employers want more than that. They want some hands on fundamental training it what they do. Welding is a good example. They naturally want an employee that can read a blue print, can do simple math and shows up every day. They also want someone who has some practical hands on experience.

I have been attending several site consultant forums and had some really insightful conversations. Face to face conversation with over 45 site consultants have helped me come up with a few new twists to market West Plains. Some things are very simple. We need to present ourselves as a Rural Missouri community not a small community in Missouri. Small difference but a big impact.

I recently had a site consulting team and the Missouri Partnership do a mock site visit. They pretended to be a furniture manufacturing firm looking for a location. They modeled the visit after a real project. They spent a day and a half in the community as though they were doing an actual visit.

Lets just say it was a great learning experience. I found things that need to be done better and they pointed out things the community needs to improve on. Over all it was a very favorable review.

It is my hope that before mid-year I will be able to put together a workforce summit. It is my hope to bring together the academic, training, industrial, state and governmental units to have a very candid conversation about why 45% of our labor force do not work. Why are people fired, not hired, won't get training, etc. If we want to succeed in attracting more industry we must get a handle on labor.

I say all this but please look around the community and decide how you can help. We are doing well but there is always room for improvement.



"Direction is more important than the speed you travel"

DIRECTORS COMMENTS

NJCAA National Volleyball Tournament to return to West Plains

After a seven-year absence, the National Junior College Division 1 Volleyball Tournament will return to West Plains.

West Plains has been notified that it has been selected to share a four-year bid with Hutchinson, Kan., which has previously hosted the tournament and is home to several other National Junior College tournaments. West Plains will host the tournament in 2020 and 2022, with Hutchinson hosting in 2021 and 2023. This is an economic engine for West Plains with upwards of 2.2 million dollars impact

Corporate Executives & Leading Consultants Reveal-Facilities Plans in an Uncertain Operating Environment

Despite an uncertain operating environment and continuing concerns about the availability of skilled labor, plans for new and expanded facilities are still on the horizon, according to the results of Area Development's 33rd Annual Corporate Survey and 15th Annual Consultants Survey.

Types of new domestic facilities to be opened by clients (as a percentage of total number of projects):

Manufacturing	24%
Warehouse/ Distribution	21%
Headquarters	14%
Data Center	7%
Back Office/ Call Center	13%
Shared Services	9%
R&D	11%
Other	2%

Importance of a shovel-ready/ pre-certified site in clients' site searches:

Very important	27%
Somewhat important	53%
Minor consideration	16%
Of no importance	3%

Domestic location projects consultants are working on are slated for the following regions (as a percentage of total number of projects):

New England (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	3%
Middle Atlantic (DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA)	8%
South Atlantic (NC, SC, VA, WV)	14%
Mid-South (AR, KY, MO, TN)	11%
South (AL, FL, GA, LA, MS)	15%
Midwest (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)	11%
Plains (IA, KS, MN, NE, ND, SD)	7%
Mountain (CO, ID, MT, UT, WY)	8%
Southwest (AZ, NM, OK, TX)	15%
West (CA, NV, OR, WA)	7%
Offshore (AK, HI, PR, VI)	1%

Combined Ratings* CORPORATE SURVEY

Site Selection Factors	2018	2017
Ranking		
1. Availability of skilled labor	90.5	88.8 (3) **
2. Labor costs	89.1	91.1 (2)
3. Highway accessibility	87.2	91.3 (1)
4. Corporate tax rate	86.7	83.2 (8)
5. Tax exemptions	83.0	85.9 (5)
6. Quality of life	82.8	87.2 (4)
7. State and local incentives	82.5	81.3 (9)
8. Energy availability and costs	77.8	76.0 (13)
9. Available buildings	76.7	75.9 (14)
10. Occupancy or construction costs	76.1	85.9 (51)
11. Available land	75.6	76.9 (10)
12. Low union profile	74.4	71.4 (18)
13. Proximity to suppliers	72.8	76.4 (12)
14. Proximity to major markets	71.8	84.6 (7)
15. Right-to-work state	70.2	74.7 (15)
16. Training programs/technical colleges	69.9	72.8 (16)
16t. Environmental regulations	69.9	70.2 (19)
18. Inbound/outbound shipping costs	69.2	71.8 (17)
19. Expedited or "fast-track" permitting	64.9	76.7 (11)
20. Accessibility to major airport	62.7	56.4 (21)
21. Availability of long-term financing	60.5	64.6 (20)
22. Availability of unskilled labor	59.4	52.0 (24)
23. Raw materials availability	55.6	56.0 (22)
24. Water availability	51.6	55.3 (23)
25. Availability of advanced ICT services	50.0	42.7 (26)
26. Railroad service	46.6	29.9 (28)
27. Proximity to innovation commercialization/R&D centers	41.5	44.7 (25)
28. Waterway or oceanport accessibility	34.1	31.2 (27)

*All figures are percentages and are the total of the "very important" and "important" ratings of the Area Development Corporate Survey and are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

** 2017 ranking

TOP STATES FOR DOING BUSINESS 2018

1. 1. GEORGIA
2. 2. TEXAS
3. 3. ALABAMA
4. 4. TENNESSEE
5. 5. SOUTH CAROLINA
6. 6. NORTH CAROLINA
7. 7. LOUISIANA
8. 8. MISSISSIPPI
9. 9. INDIANA
10. 10. FLORIDA
11. 11. OHIO
12. 12. ARIZONA
13. 13.t KENTUCKY
14. 13.t VIRGINIA
15. 15. ARKANSAS
16. 16. OKLAHOMA
17. 17. UTAH
18. 18.t MICHIGAN
19. 18.t NEW YORK
20. 20. NEVADA

Blue-collar jobs paying \$90,000 drive more workers to trade school

Allana Akhtar

The new six-figure job? Trade work.

Trade schools are now touting how blue-collar professionals like plumbers, electricians, and mechanics make more money than workers whose roles required bachelor's degrees, Bloomberg reports. While the average pay of some of these occupations totals \$52,000, specialized jobs including aircraft mechanics and heavy-equipment technicians can surpass \$100,000. Bloomberg reported plumbers in Atlanta earn \$90,000 in wages and commissions -- 70% higher than the region's average income.

Though college grads still earn more than their non-graduate peers, avoiding student debt could make trade schools more appealing. Many trade programs are covered in part by employers, and state sponsored programs in Michigan and Georgia offer trade degree's tuition-free.

In addition to local governments and trade schools, businesses are also acknowledging that four-year degrees may not be necessary to get a high-paying job. Prominent business leaders such as Siemens USA CEO Barbara Humpton and Apple CEO Tim Cook publicly dismissed the idea that four-year degrees guarantee career-readiness. Cook even said half of Apple's new hires in 2018 did not hold a four year degree.

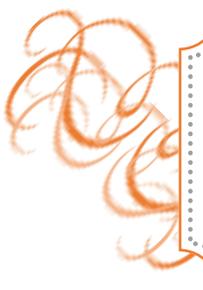
The future of work may not require a bachelor's degree to get a good job. Of the 10 occupations that are expected to see the most job growth through 2026, only one, a registered nurse, requires a college degree, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Additionally, six of these jobs - personal care aides, restaurant wait staff, janitors, general laborers, home health aides, and food preparers - do not require even a high school diploma.

In total, at least 64% of jobs in 2026 will require no education beyond high school, compared with 25% of jobs that will likely require a four year degree

"Our real education 'mismatch' may be of a sort many of us prefer not to consider - that we are educating our citizens for jobs that simply do not and will not exist," Ellen Ruppel Shell, author of *The Job: Work and Its Future in a Time of Radical Change*, wrote.

While college grads still earn more than \$932 the median earning for all workers, the trend against going to school may already be starting. In 2016, wages for those with just a high school degree or less rose faster than any other group, according to data from the Economic Policy Institute. Young workers saddled with student debt are also fed up with the system, as nearly half of indebted millennials recently told INSIDER college was not worth the economic hassle.

"Preparing young minds is a vital exercise, one we must continue to pursue with vigor, creativity, and humility," Shell wrote. "But the insistence that more education on its own necessarily enhances earning prospects is not only wrong, it's cruel, saddling too many of us with unrealistic prospects and crippling debt."



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