

White Paper



-
- ✓ Clarifications
 - ✓ The framework
 - ✓ The partners
 - ✓ How it all ties together
-

... presented to the Workforce Development Roundtable

[August 11, 1999 Revision]

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Worknet – What it is ... How it works	1
Worknet History	2
What Programs are Included in Worknet.....	4
The Partners.....	5

Worknet White Paper

Executive Summary

This White Paper serves the purpose of “putting it all down on paper” so we will all “be on the same page” when it comes to Worknet - what it is and how it works. The goal of this White Paper is to have one single source that defines Worknet and provides the details of how it functions (i.e., this document). As things change with Worknet, along with the laws relating to it, those changes should be so noted in this White Paper.

The original draft of this document was created by taking information about Worknet from several sources and “smooshing” it all together. As subsequent drafts and revisions are created we then will have defined Worknet with great specificity.

Worknet – what it is ... how it works

Worknet of Merced County is an integrated workforce development system for employers, job seekers, and students. Merced County’s Worknet is a unique partnership that comes together to provide comprehensive recruiting and training programs. This is for creating a workforce in general as well as for providing assistance to new and expanding businesses.

Worknet works on three basic levels:

- Developing the workforce
- Economic development
- Business retention and expansion

The partners in Worknet come together in a variety of ways to address situations as they develop. Worknet takes on many forms depending on the specific situation involved. Worknet might only be two or three agencies and/or entities or it might include several. It depends on the needs.

Worknet, as it is now, is the One-Stop partnership that responds to community needs. Working together the partners develop working plans to resolve issues related to the workforce.

Worknet customers are employers, students, and people looking for new jobs, better jobs, or first jobs.

Worknet focuses on:

- Helping residents of Merced County find, train for, and retain jobs.
- Helping businesses and corporations grow and locate in Merced County.

Through Worknet a business or company works with one key contact person to take advantage of all local, state and federal financial and training assistance programs. This contact person facilitates the paperwork and also coordinates with all public agencies to provide “seamless support” throughout the entire process of “setting up business” here in Merced County.

Worknet History

Worknet is the result of an evolving process based on lots of local collaboration.

Worknet of Merced County grew out of a system wide desire to develop an integrated intake and referral system. In 1990, utilizing grant funding from the Department of Education, Merced College organized the Adult Education Consortium, with membership including Merced Adult School, Merced County Office of Education (MCOE), Merced County PITD, GAIN (now called CalWorks), the Merced Chamber of Commerce, the Merced Downtown Association, the Merced County Library, the Central Valley Opportunity Center, Merced County Department of Economic and Strategic Development, and Merced College and others. Through several changes, the consortium became known as the Learning Network (LearnNet) and then Worknet of Merced County.

The LearnNet project did not accomplish what was intended and was gradually disbanded. The consortium continued to meet in two forums, those being the One-Stop Committee and the other being the Workforce Development Roundtable.

Through the One-Stop Committee (which came about in relation to a One-Stop grant), the term Worknet was adopted to represent all the partners. Then a logo for Worknet was developed. This group stopped meeting when their purpose had been completed.

Many of the same members continue to meet monthly as part of the Workforce Development Roundtable, keeping each other apprised of what is happening in their agencies.

From LearnNet to Worknet

LearnNet's original concept was for electronic collaboration through a modem-based hookup which, with the explosive growth of the Internet, was quickly surpassed. Worknet is now developing and we have recognized the need for a networked community information system which will link all of the above listed agencies with the potential of being available county wide.

LearnNet started with community information which included program information on a wide variety of training and economic growth opportunities. Agencies were asked to provide information for individuals and businesses interested in opportunities in Merced County for education, training, support services and economic development. The concept was that Worknet would also have the capability of transmitting client information between agencies to ease the referral process.

It was originally intended that Worknet would have One-Stop locations in agencies throughout the county. And, the plan was to eventually locate touch screen kiosks in strategic areas to provide public access.

Under a One-Stop planning grant, the Workforce Development partners reinforced the commitment to develop a workforce development system (i.e., a real system of services). Each participating agency provided a "front door" to offer services in the local workforce system with the goal being to develop a "no wrong door" system for individuals and companies to find services. As a step in this development, agency information (from brochures and other documents) was developed. The One-Stop committee wanted to have one identity (a logo) and out of that Worknet was born.

Due to some budget issues, a rather elaborate Worknet information package was not produced as planned and the logo, to be used by each participating agency for their "front door" was not replicated.

The Economic Development Connection

If you "fast forward" to the present, Worknet has evolved to become the workforce development connection to economic development.

In the past, the economic development agency would call upon several of the workforce development agencies to prepare materials or presentations of our services to a prospect company who had labor force needs. It soon became clear to us that this approach was too bureaucratic and confusing to the prospect. What we needed to present was seamless system of services, a one-stop approach for the employers. Thus, the Worknet approach, where the partners work together to provide a "single point of contact" for businesses looking to develop and/or expand in Merced County.

Under this concept, the worknet team develops a package of services available through Worknet. (No longer will the employer need to contend with multiple education, training and service agencies) Usually, a single account representative will be identified to work with a company to take advantage of all the local, state and federal financial (tax credits, etc) and training assistance. The account representative will facilitate on behalf of, and will coordinate with all the Worknet agencies to provide the company with seamless support throughout the entire process and beyond. Worknet services start up, but will continue to provide retention services.

What Programs are Included in Worknet?

- JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) – Adult, Youth, Dislocated & Economically Disadvantaged Workers
- Rehabilitation Programs
- School-to-Work Programs
- Job Service (CalJOBS)
- Career & Technical Training Programs
- Economic Development and Redevelopment Programs
- Older Worker Programs
- Unemployment Insurance
- Adult Education Programs
- Veterans Employment Service
- Migrant/Seasonal Farm Worker Services
- Welfare-to-Work Programs
- CalWorks

