

Center for Business Information and Research (CBIR)
Flathead Valley Community College
January 2006

Proposal for the Assessment of Workforce
Preparation and Retention in the Montana Public Sector

Several issues emerge when considering the ability of the public sector to recruit and retain qualified employees, particularly in occupations where technical expertise is required. The private sector is subject to the forces of demand and supply in its resource markets. Wages and benefits, along with job amenities, enter into the ability to attract and retain employees in a highly mobile employment economy.

This study proposes to identify and inventory government employment requiring technical expertise and which most likely confronts competitive challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified employees. Once identified and inventoried, key informants will be interviewed to assess individual departments and their ability to attract and retain technically qualified employees. A case study approach is proposed, using input from Bureau Chiefs and their counter-parts to determine public sector success in recruiting employees with at least minimal qualifications. Additionally, job retention will also be addressed. Important here is the ability of government compensation and promotion to parallel with compensation and promotion opportunities in the private sector.

The case study approach will identify three government sectors where employment recruitment and retention are most likely problematic. These sectors will be identified through preliminary interviews with Agency Heads and personnel from the Economic Development Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. Critical occupations will be identified based on the ability to attract and retain qualified employees. Key informants will then be interviewed in several economic areas to assess any geographical considerations in recruiting and retaining employees. The economic areas could include, but not be limited to, two metro and one rural area representing different geographical locales in the state.

The study will serve as a possible template for further investigation into the public sector challenges with respect to workforce recruitment and retention.

Budget:

In cooperation with the Economic Development Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, the Center for Business Information and Research will develop a timeline for project monitoring and completion. The CBIR will provide all services necessary to complete the study, and will submit progress reports once step by step project timelines are established.

Interviews will be conducted via a mix of on-site personal interviews and telephone conversations. The CBIR will also be available for all personal appearances necessary to present and report the study's findings.

A Research Assistant will work with the Director of CBIR to provide technical assistance and report generation.

Travel:

1500 miles @ \$.445/mile	\$667.50
5 days @ \$23.00/day	\$115.00

Office Supplies

Paper, telephone, copy charges	\$313.00
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Personnel

Research Assistant @ \$12.00/hour	\$1,200.00
Benefits @ 11%	\$132.00

Director, CBIR @ \$110.00/hour	\$8,250.00
Benefits @ \$13%	\$,072.50

CBIR/FVCC Overhead @ 10%	\$1,175.00
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TOTAL	\$12,925.00
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