



PASCO EDC
NORTH TAMPA BAY, FLORIDA

TALENT ATTRACTION REPORT

TASK FORCE FINAL SUMMARY
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2023

OBJECTIVE

The Pasco EDC is deeply committed to charting a path that acknowledges the entirety of talent attraction – not just in numbers, but in ensuring quality and skill compatibility. We are acutely aware of the widening disparity between the existing workforce and the rapidly growing demands of our target industries, especially in the realms of Life Sciences and Advanced Manufacturing. The current landscape foretells a potential shortfall in the availability of a proficient workforce equipped to handle the nuances of these industries, which are becoming the pillars of Pasco's economic future.

It is with this understanding that our strategy is crafted to be holistic. Instead of simply focusing on individual components of talent attraction, we are integrating every facet – from education and training to lifestyle and community engagement, ensuring that we attract individuals who don't just have the skills, but also resonate with the ethos and potential of Pasco County.

Moreover, while the emphasis is currently on Life Sciences and Advanced Manufacturing, Pasco EDC envisions this strategy to be fluid. The essence of our approach is adaptability. As Pasco evolves, so will its industrial landscape. New industries will emerge, and existing ones will undergo transformation. Our strategy is designed to seamlessly adapt to these shifts, ensuring that Pasco County is always prepared to meet the workforce demands of its primary industries.

Additionally, this blueprint is not just about bringing talent here, but also about nurturing and retaining it. By fostering an environment of growth, innovation, and community, we aim to make Pasco not just a workplace, but a home for these skilled individuals. This ensures continuity, loyalty, and a deep-seated commitment to the county's progress.

In sum, Pasco EDC's talent attraction strategy is more than just a plan – it's a vision for the county's prosperous future, where industries thrive, communities flourish, and every individual can realize their potential.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Chair: Gina Temple, <i>Formerly with</i> HCA Florida Bayonet Point	Troy Hernly, AJAX Building Corp.
Gilit Kontny, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices	Michael Wolf, Columnar Holdings
Morgan Fell, Marsh & McLennan	Dr. Lori Marie Romano, Pasco County Schools
Cynthia Spidell, Stearns Weaver Miller	Nick Carideo, Baycare
Thomas Wittenberg, <i>Formerly with</i> Realty Trust Group	Jorge Martinez, Amerant Bank

SCOPE OF WORK

FOUR IN PERSON MEETINGS WERE HELD AMONGST TASK FORCE MEMBERS STARTING IN JANUARY OF 2023 AND CONCLUDING IN JUNE OF 2023

Other research activities included, but were not limited to:

- Sarah Alway, Pasco EDC Workforce Coordinator, visited Bentonville, Arkansas to observe tactics of talent attraction that have been successful for Walmart, and discussed findings with task force
- Task force members interviewed Adam Thomas, Director of Tourism for Florida's Sports Coast
- Utilization of lean tools methods and techniques to develop a specific action plan from a larger concept

GAP ANALYSIS DATA POINTS

In recent times, the Life Sciences & Medical Technology sector has emerged as one of the key drivers of economic growth and innovation, not only in Pasco County but also on a national scale. However, a meticulous gap analysis conducted through JobsEQ has brought some significant challenges to light.

1. SUPPLY DEFICIT IN PASCO COUNTY

According to the analysis, the Life Sciences & Medical Technology sector in Pasco County is grappling with a considerable supply deficit of talent for various roles, with not a single role demonstrating a surplus. This is indeed troubling news for an industry that relies heavily on specialized talent for driving innovation, R&D, and product development. The situation becomes even more acute when one considers that a single firm in the Life Sciences sector in the county is looking at augmenting its workforce by adding a projected 14,500 positions.

2. NARROW TALENT AVAILABILITY

Further magnifying the challenge is the fact that among the top 25 roles expected to be critical for this firm, only the role of Customer Service Representatives seems to have an adequate talent pool in the county. This stark disparity underscores a potential bottleneck in the county's efforts to solidify its standing as a burgeoning hub for the Life Sciences & Medical Technology sector. Roles like clinical researchers, bioengineers, and lab technicians – typically considered the backbone of this industry – appear to be in short supply.

3. NATIONAL LAYOFFS – A PARADOXICAL SITUATION

On the national front, the trends offer a paradox. In 2023, a staggering 25 biotech companies have either announced or executed layoffs, culminating in over 500 job losses in the sector. This, when juxtaposed against the previous year's data where 119 biotech firms laid off their employees, paints a picture of volatility and uncertainty. While at first glance, it might seem counterintuitive to have both talent shortages and layoffs in the same industry, it's essential to understand the underlying factors. These layoffs could be a result of numerous circumstances, such as mergers and acquisitions, company restructuring, or a shift in business focus.



GAP ANALYSIS DATA POINTS

4. POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES AMIDST CHALLENGES

However, the layoffs on a national scale also suggest potential untapped talent that could be redirected to fill the gaps in regions like Pasco County. The challenge lies in creating pathways to facilitate this redirection, which might involve retraining or upskilling these professionals, especially if their prior roles do not match the current demand in Pasco County.

5. OTHER INDUSTRY TRENDS IMPACTING LIFE SCIENCES

It's also crucial to understand the broader dynamics at play. The rise of personalized medicine, telehealth, and AI in healthcare means that the Life Sciences & Medical Technology sector is undergoing rapid transformation. While there's growing demand for new roles, certain traditional positions might be seeing a contraction, leading to these layoffs.

Summary of Gap Analysis

Pasco County, with its ambition to become a major player in the Life Sciences sector, needs to address these disparities head-on. This means forging partnerships with educational institutions to enhance curriculum alignment with industry needs, creating more robust talent acquisition pipelines, or initiating programs that cater to retraining and upskilling professionals from different regions or sectors. The current challenge also presents an opportunity to rethink strategies, ensuring that the region is poised for sustainable growth in the Life Sciences & Medical Technology sector.



KEY CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

“A robust job market signals economic stability and growth. Talent is naturally drawn to areas where there are abundant opportunities and potential for career progression.”

1. RECREATION (LEISURE AND WELLNESS)

Significance: Modern professionals, especially the younger workforce, prioritize work-life balance and well-being. A region that offers recreational activities, parks, wellness centers, and cultural hubs is seen as enhancing the overall quality of life.

2. AVAILABLE JOBS

Significance: A robust job market signals economic stability and growth. Talent is naturally drawn to areas where there are abundant opportunities and potential for career progression.

3. HOUSING

Significance: Housing is a fundamental need. Affordability and quality of housing directly impact decisions on relocating for work.

4. EDUCATION (COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES)

Significance: Colleges and Universities are not just centers of learning but also hubs of innovation, research, and development. They produce the skilled workforce industries rely on.

5. EDUCATION (K-12)

Significance: A strong foundation in primary and secondary education sets the stage for future professionals. It's also a critical factor for families considering relocation.

6. INFRASTRUCTURE

Significance: Efficient transportation, reliable utilities, and state-of-the-art facilities are the backbone of any thriving community.

RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN



1. RECREATIONAL AND LIFESTYLE ENHANCEMENT

Findings: Collaborate with Florida's Sports Coast in developing recreational opportunities that will attract skilled workers. This includes enhancing existing parks, developing new parks, and creating a comprehensive trail system.

Steps: Inventory Current Amenities: Carry out a comprehensive survey of existing recreational facilities, their conditions, and usage rates. Additionally, identify gaps or deficiencies that limit the area's appeal to potential residents.

Community Engagement: Implement feedback mechanisms like community surveys or open forums. This step would encourage community members to voice their preferences for desired recreational amenities, thereby fostering a community-centered approach.

Business Partnership: Engage in a campaign to involve local businesses in sponsoring or promoting events. This cooperation not only supports the events but also provides opportunities for companies to demonstrate their commitment to the community.

Promotion Campaign: Design and launch a multifaceted promotional campaign that targets potential talent. Utilize a range of platforms from social media to professional networks to portray the lifestyle Pasco County offers, emphasizing recreation, community spirit, and quality of life.

2. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND AFFORDABILITY

Findings: Discuss initiatives with local developers to ensure that there is adequate housing available for workers in the county.

Steps: Housing Inventory: Conduct a developer-led survey of the current housing inventory and anticipated future demand based on employment growth, population trends, and economic factors.

Developer Engagement: Host meetings with local residential developers. This collaboration allows for the mutual exchange of ideas, leading to innovative housing projects and the renovation of existing structures.

RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN

3. COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Findings: Continue to align with the school district and college/universities to develop and offer degree programs that align with in-demand jobs in target industries.

Steps: Educational Alignment Meetings: Conduct regular meetings with K-12 districts and higher education institutions to review curriculum alignment with industry needs, discussing evolving trends and how education can adapt accordingly.

Industry Collaboration: Forge strong relationships with local businesses to identify current and future skills and knowledge demands. This close collaboration ensures that the educational system produces graduates with the competencies required by the industry.

Specialized Training Programs: In close partnership with businesses and educational institutions, design and launch training programs tailored to industry needs, emphasizing areas of greatest demand and opportunity.

Mentorship Programs: Establish programs that connect students with industry professionals. These relationships offer real-world insights and advice to students, preparing them for successful careers while increasing the visibility and appeal of local industries.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Findings: Pasco EDC will work with local government to ensure that the county's infrastructure is adequate to support businesses in target industries. This includes transportation, water, and energy infrastructure.

Government Collaboration: Engage in regular discussions with local, state, and federal government entities, advocating for support for infrastructure projects. These collaborations aim to secure necessary resources and maintain alignment with broader plans and regulations.

Sustainability Initiatives: Promote measures to ensure the environmental friendliness of the county's infrastructure, such as promoting green energy, reducing emission, and supports alternative modes of transport like biking and walking.