

Understanding the Local Labor Market

Promising Career Pathways in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

Focus: Entrepreneurs

Understanding the Local Labor Market: Promising Career Pathways in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County is intended as a useful resource for career counselors and other professionals responsible for helping jobseekers make informed decisions about employment and training. Featured occupations are selected on the basis of vacancies, wages and benefits, and opportunities for advancement.

What is an entrepreneur?

- An entrepreneur is someone who starts his/her own business. Entrepreneurs tend to possess common characteristics. In general, they are:
 - Self-starters who are motivated to excel;
 - Risk-takers;
 - Able to make good, quick decisions;
 - Well-organized and excellent time managers;
 - Passionate about their business;
 - Persistent;
 - Willing to invest long hours towards their business' success.

What risks do entrepreneurs face?

- According to the Small Business Administration, 9 out of 10 small businesses fail during the first year. Good planning, however, can improve chances of success.
- There are both financial and personal risks that can put a strain on entrepreneurs and their families. Obtaining financing for a start-up business is difficult and may require committing personal assets and the business may actually lose money initially. The time commitment required to get a small business off the ground and make it successful can restrict time for friends and family.

How can I become an entrepreneur?

- The first step to starting a business is evaluating your personal goals and talents to determine if you would be a successful entrepreneur. If you think entrepreneurship is right for you, you need to determine what kind of business you want to start. You should choose a business that builds on your skills as well as your passions.
- There are numerous local organizations (see list on page 2) that assist in both starting a business and providing supports to help it prosper. Many of these organizations also connect to programs that assist specific groups (including veterans, women, minorities, and youth) with entrepreneurship.
- Making your business idea a reality requires research and a well-defined business plan. The business plan should serve as the road map for developing your business. At a minimum, a typical business plan includes: a description of the business' products/services; an analysis of the competition; the marketing strategy; the business' legal structure; necessary equipment and supplies; financing needs; and cash-flow projections.

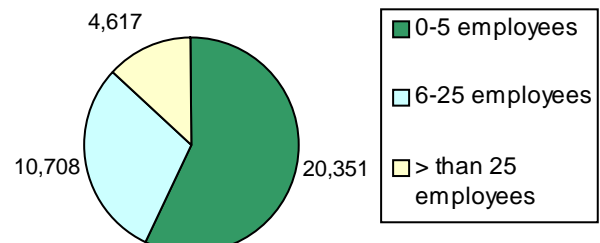
Why do entrepreneurs like their jobs?

- As business owners, entrepreneurs:
 - Get to be their own boss;
 - Benefit directly from the business' profits;
 - Enjoy the challenge of owning a business;
 - Gain personal satisfaction through creating something.

How many small businesses are there in Allegheny County?

- In Allegheny County there are 31,059 businesses (87% of all businesses) that employ 25 or fewer employees. Two-thirds of these businesses have 5 or fewer employees.

Number of Firms by Size, Allegheny County



Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (CWIA)

- Most businesses in Allegheny County with 25 or fewer employees are distributed across the following industries:
 - *Other services* including establishments providing automotive, appliance, or computer repair and maintenance and establishments providing personal care services.
 - *Professional, scientific and technical services* including establishments providing legal, accounting, or consulting services.
 - *Health care and social assistance* including physicians' offices and other establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals.
 - *Construction* including establishments engaged in building construction and engineering projects.
 - *Retail trade* including establishments selling merchandise.
 - *Accommodation and food services* including hotels and restaurants.

FOCUS: **Entrepreneurs**

What state and local organizations can help me explore entrepreneurship as a career option?

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Business Department — www.carnegielibrary.org/locations/business, 412-281-7141 — Provides online and print resources as well as workshops to assist individuals who want to start small businesses. The business department has numerous resources that address business plan preparation, business marketing, tax issues and other relevant topics.

Community Loan Fund (CLF) — www.clfund.com, 412-201-2450 — Provides access to capital for start-up businesses in the Pittsburgh region.

Duquesne University Chrysler Corporation Small Business Development Center — www.duq.edu/sbdc/, 412-396-6233 — Offers free one-on-one and team consulting to assist entrepreneurs with a range of issues related to business start-up as well as longer-term business success.

Innovation Works — www.innovationworks.org, 412-681-1520 — Promotes technology start-ups in southwestern Pennsylvania by providing risk capital, business expertise, and other supports to technology entrepreneurs.

Junior Achievement of Southwest Pennsylvania, Inc.* — www.pittsburgh.ja.org, 1-800-522-6957 x 124 — Provides in-classroom programs through elementary and secondary schools. These programs are aimed at familiarizing students with real-world economic concepts including entrepreneurship.

National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)* — www.nfte.com, 412-456-2930 — Teaches entrepreneurship to young people from low-income communities through providing an experiential curriculum to educators of middle school, high school and young adult students from these communities.

PA Department of Community and Economic Development Center for Entrepreneurial Assistance (CEA) — www.inventpa.com/default.aspx?id=6, 1-800-280-3801 — Connects individuals to entrepreneurial assistance and helpful resources such as *The Entrepreneur's Guide — Starting and Growing a Business in Pennsylvania*.

Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink — www.careerlinkpittsburgh.com, 412-552-7044 — Provides access to Project Gate, a program that assists entrepreneurs through business assessment and counseling, classroom training, and assistance in applying for financing. CareerLink also provides access to the Self-Employment Assistance Program that assists unemployed individuals with starting a business.

Pittsburgh Regional Alliance (PRA) — www.pittsburghregion.org, 412-392-1000 — Provides a range of supports (in partnership with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Entrepreneurial Assistance Network) to entrepreneurs including general consulting and assistance in accessing financing. The PRA's website enables the public to access a comprehensive list of local agencies that provide entrepreneurial assistance through its *Entrepreneurs' Quick Guide* database.

Small Business Administration (SBA) Pittsburgh District Office — www.sba.gov/pa/pitt, 412-395-6560 — Assists local entrepreneurs in starting and growing a business through its business resource center that provides training, counseling, and business-development programs.

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) — www.scorepittsburgh.com, 412-395-6560 x 130 — Provides access to retired business owners and executives who provide free and confidential counseling services to small and start-up businesses.

University of Pittsburgh Small Business Development Center — www.sbdc.pitt.edu, 412-648-1542 — Offers consulting services (free of charge) and training programs to entrepreneurs throughout the Pittsburgh region.

Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh — www.ura.org, 412-255-6669 — Provides technical assistance and financing to entrepreneurs wishing to locate a business in the city of Pittsburgh.

* *Youth-focused programs*

The Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB) is charged with promoting a coordinated and accountable employment and training system for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Responsibilities include setting and monitoring local performance standards, chartering CareerLink comprehensive and community centers that provide a range of services to jobseekers and employers, and certifying qualified training providers. Board members are appointed by Mayor Tom Murphy (City of Pittsburgh) and Chief Executive Dan Onorato (Allegheny County).

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