



**Training Proposal for:
Mettle, Inc. dba Verve Networks**

Small Business \leq \$50,000

ET15-0216

Panel Meeting of: July 25, 2014

ETP Regional Office: Sacramento

Analyst: M. Mazzone

CONTRACTOR

- Type of Industry: Services
Technology/IT
Priority Industry: Yes No
- Number of Full-Time Employees
California: 14
Worldwide: 14
Number to be trained: 18
Owner Yes No
- Out-of-State Competition: Competitors Outside CA
- Special Employment Training (SET): Yes No
- High Unemployment Area (HUA): Yes No
- Turnover Rate: 18%
- Repeat Contractor: Yes No

FUNDING

- Requested Amount: \$18,720
- In-Kind Contribution: \$22,344

TRAINING PLAN TABLE

Job No.	Job Description	Type of Training	Estimated No. of Trainees	Range of Hours		Average Cost per Trainee	Post-Retention Wage
				Class / Lab	CBT		
1	Retrainee SB <100 Priority Rate HUA	Business Skills, Management Skills	14	8-60	0	\$1,040	\$14.42
				Weighted Avg: 40			
2	Retrainee SB <100 Job Creation Initiative HUA	Business Skills	4	8-60	0	\$1,040	\$12.00
				Weighted Avg: 40			

- Reimbursement Rate: Job #'s 1 & 2: \$26 SB Priority
- County(ies): San Joaquin
- Occupations to be Trained: Administrative Staff, Technical Support Staff, Sales Representative, System Engineer, Manager, Owner
- Union Representation: Yes
 No
- Health Benefits: N/A

SUBCONTRACTORS

- Development Services: N/A
- Administrative Services: N/A
- Training Vendors: To Be Determined

OVERVIEW

Mettle Inc. dba Verve Networks (Verve Networks) (www.vervenetworks.net) was founded in 2006 and is located in Stockton. The business provides specialized IT support and services to clients throughout the Western United States. Services include web filtering and firewall, IT consulting, hardware virtualization, network, server care, backup/disaster recovery, document management, Cloud IT computing/solutions, virtual CIO, Spam protection, and Internet consulting. Their goal is to provide affordable enterprise-level IT practices and solutions to the small business sector.

Verve Networks client base include city/local governments, education, healthcare, non-profit and small and midmarket businesses in the agriculture, finance and accounting industries.

Need for Training

Verve Networks continuously faces increased competition from larger businesses from within the state of California and other states. Their major competitors include Dell, CDW and SHI. The training plans at Verve Networks focus on improving the skills of their Sales Representatives, Technical Support Staff, Administrative Staff, System Engineers and Managers to better compete with the larger business offering similar services.

In addition, customer and industry demands have increased project complexity as technologies have changed. Complexity has increased as many business professionals use their personal mobile devices for work purposes. This increases the potential for attacks on the client's network. Verve Networks is also introducing new technology to clients such as the Cloud. Providing staff with knowledge of new technology and how to market these services is essential to the future of the business. Training will upgrade staff skills and allow Verve Networks to bid on more projects. Overall, training will make Verve Networks more competitive.

Retrainee - Job Creation

In support of job creation, the Panel is offering incentives to companies that commit to hiring new employees. Under the Retrainee-Job Creation program, training for newly-hired employees will be reimbursed at a higher rate and trainees will be subject to a lower post-retention wage.

Verve Networks has plans to hire four new employees for their business as shown in Job Number 2. To be eligible for reimbursement under this Job Number, the trainees must be hired within the three-month period prior to Panel approval or during the term of contract. The need to create additional positions is due to the expected growth of the Company over the next year. The number of clients that Verve Networks provides their IT services to is steadily increasing, and a greater number of staff is required to service them.

Training Plan

Verve Networks will provide the following types of training using Class/Lab training delivery method:

Business Skills - Training will be offered to all occupations to improve product knowledge, customer service skills and technology skills. Technology skills training will focus on Networking, systems and virtualization and how staff goes about supporting and selling these technologies. Training will include course topics such as Communication and Customer Service Skills, Advanced Sales Skills, Project Management, Best Practices, Security Skills, System Engineering and Technology Management/Development.

Management Skills - Training will be offered only to Managers and the Owner. Training will focus on Management Skills and Leadership Skills to improve employee efficiencies, coaching, communication with staff, teamwork and planning.

High Unemployment Area

The 14 trainees in Job Number 1 and 4 trainees in Job Number 2 work in a High Unemployment Area (HUA), a region with unemployment exceeding the state average by at least 25%. The Company's location in San Joaquin County qualifies for HUA status under these standards.

Verve Networks is requesting a wage modification from \$14.90 to \$14.42 per hour for Job Number 1 and from \$12.19 to \$12.00 per hour for Job Number 2. [Note: Only one trainee in Job Number 1 and four trainees in Job Number 2 require the wage modification.]

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of this proposal, including the HUA wage modifications.

Exhibit B: Menu Curriculum

Class/Lab Hours

8-60

Trainees may receive any of the following:

BUSINESS SKILLS

- ❖ Revenue Marketing
- ❖ Product Knowledge
- ❖ Communication & Customer Service
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Advanced Sales
- ❖ Sales Planning & Process Management
- ❖ Advanced Business Performance
- ❖ Technology Skills
 - Networking
 - Systems
 - Virtualization
- ❖ Security
- ❖ Project Management
- ❖ Best Practices
- ❖ Technology Development
- ❖ System Engineering
- ❖ Technology Management

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Coaching
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Planning
- ❖ Management Strategy

Note: Reimbursement for retraining is capped at 60 total hours per-trainee, regardless of method of delivery.