TAMPA BAY IT WORKFORCE PROJECT

THE GOAL Understand the current and future hiring needs of IT-related companies in Tampa Bay, to ensure a steady flow of qualified workers for future economic growth.

THE PROCESS

60 interviews	**64 surveys**	**7 focus groups**
Held in-depth 1:1 interviews with business and academic leaders	*Completed surveys represented over 25% of the local IT workforce*	*Conducted with students, C-level executives, HR and educational institutions*

FINDINGS

- Tampa Bay not marketed as a "cool" place for tech

- High demand skills: JAVA, .Net and Mobile developers, Agile development, application architects, security professionals and SharePoint developers/administrators

- Future growth skills: Agile development skills, desktop support, business analytics and data mining, along with software and computer engineers

- 3-5 years of experience is the most desired and the most difficult to find

- Bachelor's degrees are overwhelmingly desired across most job functions

- Work experience is valued over certifications

- Companies desire employees committed to life-long learning and the acquisition of multiple skills

- Only 35% of respondents have a relationships with an educational institution; 65% are interested in creating internship programs

- Graduates lack knowledge of workplace technical skills

- Students are unaware of area businesses

- Students want tech challenges and opportunities to practice with in-market and emerging technologies

ACTIONS

- Create a technology brand for the Tampa Bay area that is communicated through all channels

- Offer "boot camp"-style training in high demand skills for new and experienced workers

- Increase efforts to recruit veterans to technology jobs

- Enlist professionals to provide real-world business scenarios for classes and capstone project studies

- Establish education and business partnerships to match course development with workplace demands

- Provide opportunities for creative challenges (i.e. hack-a-thons and online problem-solving contests)

- Leverage exploration labs to provide real-world experience

- Train HR departments on internship best practices

- Increase the number of internships taking place

- Create TBTF chapters on all college campuses to market area businesses and internship opportunities to students

IMPLEMENTATION The Tampa Bay Technology Forum, under the initiative "Grow Tampa Bay Tech," will serve as the central point of contact for the implementation of the IT Workforce project recommendations. The members of the IT Workforce Taskforce will provide oversight and support to the efforts.