

## **Strategic Advantage helps Cape & Islands WIB Win \$500,000 Training Grant**

### ***Background***

The Cape Cod, Massachusetts economy is primarily driven by small businesses in the hospitality and retail sectors. Many of these businesses are sole proprietors, and 90% have fewer than 20 people. This creates a unique labor market and workforce environment, according to David Augustinho, Executive Director at Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board.

Augustinho found that most small businesses in his area promote their employees from associates to managers with little or no training. Because of the relatively small size of the businesses, they do not have the resources to provide the kind of customized management training programs not normally found in areas dominated by larger companies.

To help fill this resource gap, Augustinho applied for and won a \$500,000 grant for cross-sector management training from the Massachusetts Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. Though the Fund is primarily aimed at sector-specific training programs, Augustinho successfully argued that a cross-sector management training program would provide significant returns to small business owners.

### ***Getting the Data, Winning the Grant***

To win the grant, Augustinho demonstrated that management occupations are critical to the region's economic vitality and that the working age population lacked the necessary training for their management positions.

To get the information he needed, Augustinho relied on EMSI's web-based labor market analysis tool, Strategic Advantage (SA). The tool fulfilled his need for detailed labor market data and analysis that also captured sole proprietors—a portion of the labor market that standard public labor market information does not cover. Augustinho showed that:

- Management occupations are critical to the economy, with 14% projected growth from 2007-2012.
- Management occupations are competitive, with higher than average salaries for the region.
- Management occupations have very low unemployment, at 2.4%.
- Two-thirds of the population over 25 years old do not have any postsecondary degree, which reveals a significant need for training.

With the help of Strategic Advantage, Augustinho was able to do all the research himself in a very short time. "Strategic Advantage is more than a time-saver; it allows me to do my job by providing a flexible interface for ranking, organizing, and delivering detailed data," he says. "Before I had SA, it cost the WIB \$25,000 for consultants to provide data for one of our planning documents. Now I can do it myself at a fraction of the cost."



### **Outcome**

Cape & Islands WIB was able to secure the grant and used those funds to partner with the National Graduate School, a training provider that specializes in customized training. The school will now be providing local businesses with the training capacity for 150 employees in 6 training cycles. Workers trained in the program are guaranteed a wage increase upon completion of the course, as well as gaining certificates and college credit.

### **About EMSI**

Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI) is a professional services firm that offers integrated regional data, web-based analysis tools, data-driven reports, and custom consulting services. EMSI has served thousands of workforce, education, economic development, and other policy professionals in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom, and the company's web-based **Strategic Advantage** research and analysis suite is used by over 2,500 professionals across the U.S. For more information, call (866) 999-3674 or visit [www.economicmodeling.com](http://www.economicmodeling.com).