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Recently I had the privilege to travel with the Devils Lake Regional Partnership to an “Experience North Dakota” event held in St. Paul which was sponsored by the ND Department of Commerce. The event was not targeted toward recruiting businesses back to North Dakota, but rather to recruit workforce, specifically former North Dakotans, back to North Dakota to fill the many job openings and career paths available in the state.

This being the first event of this nature for North Dakota, we didn’t know what the response might be or the possible outcome of such an event. We did know that other states have tried similar events with some reported success.

In preparation for the event, FDL had sent out a request for information on job openings and business for sale in the area. This information was gathered with the other partners in the area and shared at the show.

Others that displayed at the show included economic developers such as us, but also many businesses that have a need for employees as well as one booth on housing in North Dakota. The event was marketed as an “Experience North Dakota” event and included activities for the children attending as well as entertainment from North Dakota and of course food was served which was also from North Dakota.

The event was held on a Saturday and the morning started out slower, but decent. However, as the day went on, there were people walking in the doors at a steady stream. They brought their friends and families and also RESUMES! All seemed genuinely interested in doing what they can for North Dakota, some want to come back to raise their families and others were shocked at the salaries that are possible in North Dakota as well as the lower cost of housing. Some are reaching retirement age and want to retire here, others just wanted tourism information. All in all, the day was well worth the effort for all involved. The resumes that were gathered at our table will be shared with those that indicated a need for employees as well as others that request the information.

Those companies that had a booth at the event, left thrilled with the interest they received. The Department of Commerce is now evaluating the benefit of the show, but from this perspective, it appears to have been a success.

Until next month, feel free to stop in and visit or call me at 701-662-4933.

