

## How can Washington meet the needs of the state's economy?

### *Identify the needs of employers*

- At the end of the recession, there were an estimated 14,300 employers who had difficulty finding workers with a bachelor's, master's or Ph.D. At the same time there were 22,700 employers who had trouble finding workers with either vocational certification or a two-year degree.
- When employers have difficulty finding skilled workers, they experience lower productivity and reduced output 70 percent of the time.
- The total working age adults with high school education or less and younger people ages 18 to 24 with less than high school diploma will equal all high school graduating classes added together between 2000-2011.
- As Baby Boomers begin to retire in large numbers, employers will have to fill the skills gap with adults who are currently under-prepared in the absence of training programs.

### *Utilize two-year colleges to fill the gap*

- Nineteen (19) percent of today's jobs require a bachelor's degree. Forty one (41) percent of jobs require education that two-year colleges provide.
- One in six hard working adults in Washington doesn't have the literacy skills necessary to secure these livable wage jobs. Two-year colleges provide 95 percent of adult literacy education in the state.
- The tipping point – the difference between struggling in a low-wage job and having a good career that leads to a better life – is one year of college-level courses plus a credential, such as nursing, welding or drafting.

