

# **Attracting Working Professionals in Rural Alaskan Communities**

## **Talking Points**

# Introduction

- **Many rural communities see a net loss of residents.**
- **E.g. Southeast Alaska has a net loss of people for the past 8 years.**
- **Traditional economic development efforts has been focused on number of jobs produced.**
- **However, there is a shift in paradigm towards developing sustainable clusters of locally owned businesses that are knowledge-based and/or services that serves high-valued niche markets by attracting young entrepreneurs into the communities,**
- **....and also assist in expanding locally based businesses to capture higher value markets.**
- **The thinking is to bring higher paying jobs into the communities.**

# The 4 S's of the Next Generation

(Ryan 2004)

- ***Skeptical*** – have to earn their trust and respect.
- ***Savvy*** – on technology and information, adapted to information overload and know how to manage it, and prefer short to the point communication.
- ***Self-Reliant*** – rely on themselves to build skills and networks.
- ***Swift*** – like convenience.

**Note: based on 5000 interviews with the next generation.**

## So What Exactly are these new breeds of Entrepreneurs? (The Future Laboratory)

- ***Cross Shifters*** – in their 30s, have high income jobs. Technology is their enabler. Specialisms are knowledge-based and flexible. Enjoy high standard of living. No desire to get a salary cut because of relocation. Lifestyle in part financed with equity from city property.
- ***New Authentics*** – Also use property equity to fund a move towards rural life. Motivation is different with this group. Willing to take salary cut to improve their quality of life. Business aims include community civics and working in an ethically sound environment. Determined to “take risks, to learn, to gather knowledge, and to experience life changing moment” (80% of respondents polled).
- ***New Entrepreneur Nomads*** – tribe of freestyle, free floating, project specific me-lancers, virtual consultants, and e-assistants. They provide the administrative, consultative, distributive and distance designing support needed to keep many new business buoyant.

Note: based on 2500 interviews

# **What do they Need?**

**(The Future Laboratory; National Commission on Entrepreneurship, 2000)**

- **Trains, planes, autos**
- **Time, not distance**
- **Diversified capital sources**
- **Keep cost down, independence up from government**
- **Helping hand in business start-up and re-location**
- **Reliable Technology**
- **Hubs, clusters and networks**
- **Culture Clubs and Brain Banks**
- **Space to live, space to breathe**
- **Urban comforts**

# Objectives

***Overall:*** To conduct a pilot study on whether Kodiak has the capacity to attract working professionals

***Specific:***

- To conduct executive interviews with local and visiting working professionals on the benefits and costs of working in Kodiak
- To identify case studies of similar initiatives from other rural communities
- Work with local economic development groups such as Kodiak Chamber of Commerce, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee to implement a process to attract working professionals if results of the interviews deemed promising.