



NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE



ACT[®]

A New Credential to Certify Worker Skills

The mismatch between the skills required for most jobs and the skills of the U.S. workforce is having a significant impact on productivity and revenue across all businesses and industries.

Employers need reliable ways to measure foundational skills to ensure they are hiring the most qualified, trainable candidates. Workers may have traditional educational credentials, like a high school diploma or college degree, but these credentials are only part of the picture and may not give a clear indication of workers' job skills. That's why thousands of employers across the country have turned to WorkKeys® from ACT—the premier work readiness system available today.

ACT's Career Readiness System

Now, WorkKeys is the foundation for a nationwide Career Readiness System that links qualified individuals with employers who recognize the value of skilled job applicants. This comprehensive employment tool—available via the Internet—offers four components.

Certification: The National Career Readiness Certificate verifies that an individual has the foundational skills necessary to be successful entering employment or a training program.

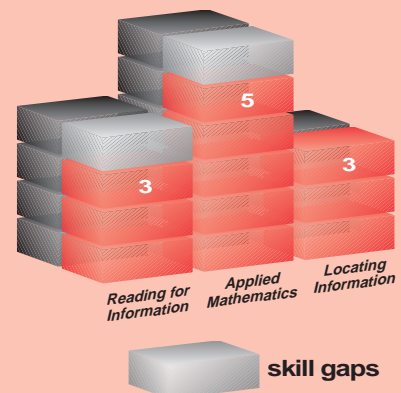
Certificate Registry: This Internet-based system allows an individual to view WorkKeys scores, apply for a certificate, and order paper copies, as well as enabling employers to verify that an individual has a certificate.

Talent Bank: Individuals who qualify for a National Career Readiness Certificate can use the Talent Bank to post credentials for employers and search job postings in a national job database.

Job Bank: Employers who utilize the National Career Readiness Certificate can post job opportunities and search for qualified candidates.

What is WorkKeys®?

WorkKeys is the leading job skills assessment system in the nation, measuring "real world" foundational skills that are critical to job success. These skills are valuable for any occupation—skilled or professional—and at any level of education. WorkKeys offers assessments, job analysis to identify skills required for jobs, and training to correct skill gaps. Educators use WorkKeys to tailor development plans, certify workforce readiness, and guarantee diplomas. Employers use the system to determine hiring qualifications and training needs. And economic and workforce developers match employers with communities to ensure the best possible workforce.



Introducing the National Career Readiness Certificate

This portable credential—powered by WorkKeys—verifies to employers anywhere in the United States that an individual has essential core employability skills in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information. These three skills are highly important to the majority of jobs in the workplace. The certificate offers individuals, employers, and educators an easily understood and universally valued credential that certifies the attainment of these workplace skills.

Career Readiness Certificates

Several states are issuing a career or work ready credential based on WorkKeys, including Alabama, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Virginia, to name a few. Many other state and regional programs are planning to affiliate with the National Career Readiness System. Individuals who meet national performance standards through their state programs are eligible to receive the National Career Readiness Certificate or obtain a national certificate seal to affix to their state certificate. Individuals can also request a national certificate if they are searching for employment on a national basis. For the most up-to-date list of state initiatives, visit our website at www.nationalcareerreadiness.org.



Joining the Initiative

State-level officials and employers across the nation are endorsing WorkKeys for their workforce programs and recognizing the National Career Readiness Certificate. To find out how your state or business can engage in these initiatives, call 1-800/WORKEY (967-5539).

Career Readiness Certificate Skill Levels

WorkKeys has generated a database with occupational profiles for thousands of jobs across the country. A majority of the jobs require certain skill levels in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information. Individuals with higher skill levels qualify for more jobs. The National Career Readiness Certificate uses test results from these assessments to award certificates in three categories:

Bronze Level signifies an individual has scored at least a level 3 in each of the three core areas (Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information) and has the necessary skills for 35 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Silver Level signifies an individual has scored at least a level 4 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary skills for 65 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Gold Level signifies an individual has scored at least a level 5 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary skills for 90 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Frequently Asked Questions About ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate

Why do individuals need a career readiness certificate?

The certificate is designed to complement other traditional credentials, such as a high school diploma, community college degree, or college degree. While these education credentials mark the fulfillment of an individual's classroom learning experiences, the certificate confirms the person's competence in a specific set of workplace skills.

How can employers use the certificate?

Employers use the certificate, along with other education and background information, to make employment and training decisions. The certificate is often considered a "plus" when presented to an employer during the hiring process because it shows the individual has attained specific workforce competency levels in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information. Higher scores indicate an individual's readiness for a greater range of jobs.

Can the certificate save employers money?

Yes. An employer may accept the certificate results to reduce hiring time and costs. If an employer is already using one or more of the WorkKeys assessments, applicants with a national certificate also may be able to skip those tests, resulting in cost savings for the employer.

What is the life cycle of a certificate?

Generally, certificates should be renewed after five years. As with any educational or skill credential, the experiences or skills it represents may change.



What makes certificate programs based on WorkKeys so successful?

Linked to work skills needed across the economy

WorkKeys measures general work skills in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, Applied Technology, Writing, Listening, Teamwork, and Observation. These skills are needed at some level in almost every job, occupation, or career in today's economy.

Meaningful to both employers and the education/training system

WorkKeys assessments can be used by any entity concerned about the employability skills of current and future employees. Test results provide valuable information for individuals, employers, high schools, colleges, one-stop centers, job services, welfare-to-work programs, correctional institutions, and occupational training programs.

Based on objective, standardized, certifiable assessment results

WorkKeys offers objective, standardized tests administered in secure, monitored testing environments to ensure the validity of test results.

Based on the skill levels needed for a majority of jobs and occupations

WorkKeys occupational profiles are based on an analysis of more than 12,000 jobs across the economy, created with input from employees who actually perform the job tasks. The WorkKeys profiles clearly indicate the skill levels needed to be successful in those jobs.

Meaningful to individuals

WorkKeys assessment results are easy for individuals to understand, helping them determine their current skill levels and how those skill levels match to occupations. Unlike most assessments, WorkKeys helps individuals compare their results to job and occupational requirements—not to other individuals.

Available for immediate use

The WorkKeys assessments have been used for nearly two decades and are available for immediate implementation. The system offers Internet-based and paper-and-pencil tests with alternate forms—a must for any certificate program. To date, more than 9 million tests have been administered.

Tied to education/training programs to improve skill levels

WorkKeys is tied to specific training and curriculum for skill improvement, enabling educators and trainers to help individuals improve their skills and enhance job opportunities.

Nationally portable

WorkKeys is a national program recognized by both employers and education/training entities. WorkKeys assessment results and certificates can help individuals not only with local job opportunities, but also with opportunities across a state or across the nation.

Developed by ACT

ACT is an internationally recognized assessment and research company best known for the ACT® test, which helps students transition into college. ACT is equally committed to helping individuals transition into and within the workplace using WorkKeys.



Benefits of the National Career Readiness Certificate Program

- Enables educators, economic developers, and employers to work collaboratively toward the common goal of a well-trained workforce
- Documents that the workforce is ready for jobs that are available
- Serves as a proven economic development tool
- Explains to job seekers and applicants the skills they are going to need for jobs
- Increases the tax base by keeping successful employers in the state
- Helps educators adequately prepare students for careers and the workplace
- Increases communication between educators, training organizations, economic and workforce developers, and employers

To learn more about how your state, region, or business can affiliate with the National Career Readiness Certificate, call 1-800/WORKKEY (967-5539).

www.nationalcareerreadiness.org



WorkKeys®

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