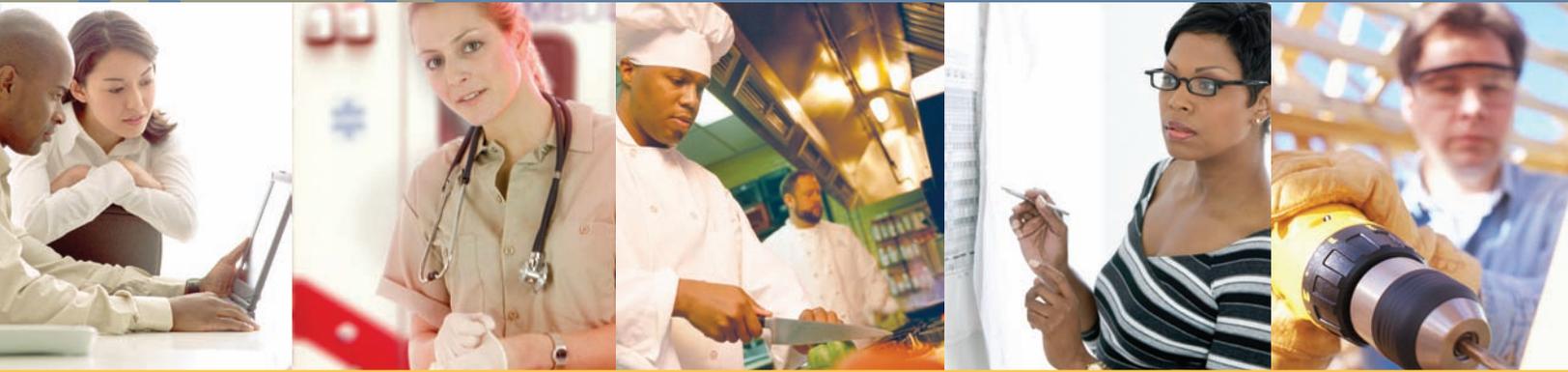


An Employer's Guide to Building a Quality Workforce



Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate

A portable credential that confirms to employers that an individual possesses basic workplace skills in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information – skills that all jobs require.

CERTIFIED

Arkansas
Works!

Building Arkansas' Workforce.
One Worker At A Time!

WorkKeys[™]



KeyTrain[®]

Finding Skilled Employees

Employers are constantly seeking a competitive edge. They need employees who are workplace ready and have the foundational skills necessary for success.

An Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate ensures that a newly-hired employee has the skills required for 21st century jobs.

Numerous surveys have identified a gap between the current workforce and the basic skills needed by employers. In order to reduce the cost of remedial training and lost efficiency, more companies are implementing pre-employment assessments to identify these skills before hiring. Arkansas joins more than 20 states that have implemented the ACT WorkKeys® Assessment System as part of a certificate or workforce development program.

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and Arkansas Workforce Investment Board purchased the KeyTrain® instruction and the WorkKeys® assessments as part of an ongoing effort to respond to the needs of employers for a better trained and skilled workforce across the state.

The Arkansas CRC certifies that a person has core employability skills required across multiple industries and occupations. The certificate will help distinguish job seekers from the competition and help them enhance their workplace skills.

Even if a job seeker has a GED, high school diploma or post secondary degree, the Arkansas CRC further verifies that he can handle tasks such as finding information, reading instructions and directions, and working with figures – tasks common in today's workplace.



Building Arkansas' Workforce.
One *Worker At A Time!*

Assessment and Training With KeyTrain®

A potential employee's first step toward achieving an Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate is to take the KeyTrain® instruction to determine if he is ready to take the WorkKeys® assessments. If the individual does not score adequately on KeyTrain®, this indicates a need for skill improvement. The KeyTrain® system can be used to improve his skill level.



The KeyTrain® system includes targeted, self-paced instruction, pre-assessments, a complete learning management system and an occupational job profiles database. These components can be used to help individuals learn, practice and demonstrate the skills they need to succeed in the jobs and careers they desire.

KeyTrain® includes instruction for all levels of WorkKeys® and pre-WorkKeys® skills. It is available via the Internet, CD, or print.

KeyTrain® and WorkKeys® are workforce development tools to ensure “no worker is left behind.”

What is WorkKeys®?

WorkKeys® is a comprehensive employability skills assessment tool designed to help employers and individuals develop better workplace skills. Thousands of companies in the United States and internationally use WorkKeys® skill assessments, job profiles, training evaluations, research and reporting services to assess skill needs and measure progress.

CERTIFIED

**Arkansas
Works!**

For more information or assistance regarding the
Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate, contact

Arkansas Department of Workforce Services
1-866-757-2999
crc@arkansas.gov

Visit our Web site at
www.ArkansasAtWork.org
www.dws.arkansas.gov

Earning an Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate

The KeyTrain® instruction may be taken at any of the 32 Arkansas Department of Workforce Services local offices or Arkansas Workforce Centers. The WorkKeys® assessments may be taken at any of the 22 two-year colleges throughout the state; the Valley View Adult Education Center in Jonesboro; the Adult Education Centers in Conway, Magnolia, Texarkana, and Russellville; Henderson State University/Southwest Arkansas Technology Learning Center; and the Center of Business and Professional Development at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. A full list of the assessment sites can be found at the Arkansas CRC Web site: www.ArkansasAtWork.org.

To earn an Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate, individuals are assessed in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information through the WorkKeys® employability skills assessment system. As a result of the assessments, individuals earn a career readiness certificate or identify areas in which they need further instruction.

Reading for Information – the ability to understand information in common workplace documents such as letters, memos, procedures and instructions

Applied Mathematics – the ability to use mathematics in solving common workplace problems

Locating Information – the ability to understand and extract information from graphics such as charts and tables

An individual can qualify for and receive a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate by assessing at appropriate skill levels on the WorkKeys® assessments.

Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate Skill Levels

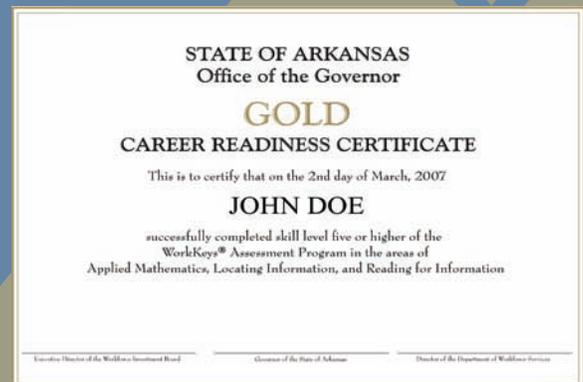
Gold – Scores a **Level 5** on WorkKeys® assessments and possesses core employability skills for approximately **90 percent** of the 14,000 jobs profiled by WorkKeys® in the three skill areas

Silver – Scores a **Level 4** on WorkKeys® assessments and possesses core employability skills for approximately **65 percent** of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys® in the three skill areas

Bronze – Scores a **Level 3** on WorkKeys® assessments and possesses core employability skills for approximately **30 percent** of the jobs profiled by WorkKeys® in the three skill areas

The back of each certificate provides detailed information about the skills of the individual earning the certificate.

The Governor of Arkansas, the Director of the Department of Workforce Services, and the Executive Director of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board sign each Career Readiness Certificate to certify that the individual has successfully completed the WorkKeys® assessments.



Arkansas Works! Benefits Everyone...

What are the benefits of the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate?

Employers

- ◆ Reduces turnover, overtime, and waste while increasing morale
- ◆ Takes the guesswork out of selection decisions
- ◆ Improves the effectiveness of training dollars
- ◆ Streamlines hiring by including a preferred certificate level in job postings
- ◆ Meets EEOC requirements

Job Seekers/Individuals

- ◆ Builds confidence that skills meet the needs of local employers
- ◆ Gives advantage over other job applicants who have not demonstrated needed skills
- ◆ Determines skill improvement and training needs
- ◆ Possesses a portable skills credential that enhances employability and sets the stage for possible career advancement and lifelong learning

Educators

- ◆ Increases chances that graduates will be hired
- ◆ Enables students to see a reason to take coursework seriously
- ◆ Improves students' success in entry-level and subsequent jobs
- ◆ Aligns curricula to meet the job skills employers need
- ◆ Provides a workforce development tool that ensures "no worker is left behind"

Community

- ◆ Keeps employers from moving entry-level jobs to other cities, states, or countries
- ◆ Decreases unemployment rates
- ◆ Creates a work ready community to improve the quality of life for residents
- ◆ Increases the tax base through more profitable business partners
- ◆ Attracts new employers to the state, resulting in economic development



A Partnership for KeyTrain® and WorkKeys®

The following agencies and institutions are collaborating to implement the KeyTrain® instruction, WorkKeys® assessments, and Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate:

- Arkansas Department of Workforce Services will provide the KeyTrain® instruction
- Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and Arkansas' 10 Local Workforce Investment Areas will provide KeyTrain® instruction
- 22 two-year colleges will provide KeyTrain® and WorkKeys®
- Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's 52 Adult Education Centers and Career and Technical Education Programs will provide developmental skills and KeyTrain® instruction
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission will recruit new business and industry
- Arkansas Department of Higher Education will provide the KeyTrain® instruction to the clients and participants in the Career Pathways Program
- Arkansas Department of Education



Arkansas Department of Workforce Services
P.O. Box 2981
Little Rock, AR 72203
1-866-757-2999
Voice 1-800-285-1121
TDD 1-800-285-1131

“Equal Opportunity Employer/Program”

“Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.”