

The Workplace Excellence Series

Delivering Essential Skills for Workplace Success



THE REALITY: A Crucial Skills Gap in the Workforce

In today's competitive workplace, the success of employees and employers alike depends on a strong workforce comprised of people with not only the educational, technical or trade "hard" skills required for the job, but also the essential "soft" skills to survive, thrive and compete. Essential workplace skills include effective communication, dependability, attitude, and so much more, all of which add up to professionalism on the job and desire to help the company succeed.

THE RESPONSE: The Workplace Excellence Series

The Workplace Excellence Series responds to this reality by bridging the skills gap. Developed through a public-private partnership with employer input and vetted across industries, it helps job seekers, students, veterans, and workers at all levels to cultivate the essential workplace skills employers seek when hiring, retaining, and advancing employees today.

WHY it was developed

- Companies demand essential workplace skills. Across the nation, employers identify a need for candidates and workers who offer more than the hard skills for the job. "Employers expressed that 69% of candidates demonstrate inadequate basic employability skills," according to the Project Manager of the EFF Work Readiness Credential.
- These vital skills are lacking in many workers and job seekers. Increasingly, Americans are not receiving training, role modeling, and accountability to develop the essential skills that produce workplace excellence.
- Few are teaching these skills. There is little high-quality, comprehensive workplace excellence training available for students, job seekers and incumbent workers, and less that teaches the employer's perspective.
- These skills can be taught. The Workplace Excellence Series is a high-quality, comprehensive, career-focused approach to building these skills.

WHO developed it

Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation is a public non-profit organization which exists to help business and people gain a competitive edge in employment. A premiere provider of workforce services in Maryland, they serve more than 20,000 unique job seekers each year, including displaced workers, youth and older workers, veterans, and more. They are committed to creating workforce solutions for businesses. Their services to employers include recruitment, retention, support during downsizing, and assistance in upgrading the skills of the existing workforce.

WorkNet Solutions is a for-profit firm dedicated to improving performance and results for employment service providers across North America. They are known for understanding and teaching the employer's perspective in ways that produce immediate and long-term success for individuals, organizations, and companies. WorkNet co-authored "No One Is Unemployable," "The 6 Reasons You'll Get the Job," and the WorkNet-Model, and have created more than 60 tools used across the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and the U.K.

“*I truly believe in the Workplace Excellence [Series]; and I really believe that any employer will definitely get 10-fold return on investment from the product.*”

– Tishuana Hodge, Regional Director of Human Resources, Hilton Baltimore BWI

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HOW it was developed

1. Focus groups were conducted with key stakeholders to establish the need for the series and to clarify the content. Stakeholders included employers from various industries, community organizations that teach soft skills, and workforce program staff.
2. WorkNet Solutions used the focus group findings and additional research to craft a unique, workplace-based series of ten modules.
3. The modules were piloted with a group of job seekers, employers, workforce program staff, and community partners to test the quality of the curriculum, and to garner constructive feedback.
4. Based on feedback from the pilot session, the series was revised, and the Facilitation Guides, slide presentations, and other supplemental materials and resources were developed.
5. An in-house 'road test' was conducted.
 - AAWDC began using the series in their programs and served over 300 clients.
 - WorkNet Solutions trained key AAWDC staff in the core competencies to promote a culture of workplace excellence, and to ensure the series produces the best results.
 - AAWDC and WorkNet leadership met regularly with staff delivering the series.
6. Based on the road test, the series and all the supporting materials were improved, finalized, produced, and made available for purchase by other service providers.

WHO should use it

The Workplace Excellence Series is designed for use by:

Workforce Service Providers

serving job seekers & changers

Providers increase immediate and long-term outcomes as clients gain confidence, improve their presentation to potential employers, get hired faster, and perform better once hired.

Education & Training Providers

serving an array of students

Providers increase students' career prospects and success as students gain perspective, see the clear connection between education and work, and build habits for future success.

Companies

supporting incumbent workers

Companies increase employee performance as workers and new hires learn the employer's perspective, and actively build the company's bottom-line while decreasing the costs of turnover.

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