

GreenWays



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT | TOOL 4.4

TEACHING INDUSTRY SKILLS AND CREDENTIALS

TOOL 4.4

Training programs can align the industry skills they teach with what businesses need by engaging employers in two roles: 1) helping identify and vet the skills and credentials covered by your curriculum; and 2) helping with instruction. By asking for the curriculum support, regardless of whether the employer partners are able to participate in instruction, programs demonstrate that they are interested in teaching the right skills, that their trainees are being taught by skilled practitioners, and that the instruction results in an industry-recognized credential. Use this worksheet to develop and track employer feedback and participation in each of the industry skills your program teaches and the resulting credentials for program graduates.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOL

Curriculum developers, lead instructors, program managers

EMPLOYER FEEDBACK ON INDUSTRY SKILLS AND CREDENTIALS

Every occupation has a list of “hard skills” critical to success in a job or career. Your ability to effectively teach the right hard skills will be a key factor in whether an employer chooses to become involved with your program. This means you want employers to think that you are teaching the industry skills they need.

Before you approach employers for advice on your curriculum, develop a list of the skills and industry-recognized credentials you teach that reflect the industry. You can build this skills list using O*NET and real-time LMI (see *Tool 4.3*), through a task analysis of the jobs targeted by your program, with the advice of your employer committee or other trusted partners, or based on the curricula of other successful training programs in the same field. Ask employers whether your set of skills matches what they think should be taught.

Job training will be most helpful if it leads to industry-recognized credentials that signal to employers that program graduates have the expertise that they value. Ask employers which credentials make a difference in their hiring and promotion decisions or that they otherwise factor into their workforce decisions. Feedback from employers on which credentials they respect and how they use them can help you make sure that the credentials within your program are, in fact, industry-recognized.

Asking employers to teach part of the curriculum is a good way to open this conversation. You can also ask if these skills and credentials match the criteria they use when hiring a new worker. When gathering feedback, ask about not only the skills and credentials on your list, but also what is missing.

EMPLOYERS AS TEACHERS

Employers will trust your program graduates more if they have been taught by knowledgeable and experienced instructors. Some of the best teachers of industry-specific hard skills are not traditional teachers, but are current practitioners at local businesses. Many of these employers make themselves available to help teach industry-specific hard skills. Their employees serve as presenters, instructors, coaches, curriculum developers, and “train-the-trainer” teachers. As an added benefit, this support is often provided for free to training programs.

Ask employers which of the industry skills they can help deliver, and try to get employers involved in as much of the curriculum as possible.

Use the worksheet on the next page to track both employer feedback on the industry skills in your curriculum and employer support in instructional delivery.

TRACKING EMPLOYER SUPPORT IN INSTRUCTION

Targeted occupations: _____

Describe how you identified these skills and credentials as critical to the curriculum: _____

INDUSTRY SKILL OR CREDENTIAL	COMPANY AND EMPLOYEE	COMMITMENT TO TEACH	COMMITMENT TO ASSIST	FEEDBACK
Skills				
Industry-Recognized Credentials				
Other skills or credentials recommended by employers				

SAMPLE WORKSHEET

Targeted occupations: Solar Photovoltaic Installation Technician

Describe how you identified these skills as critical to the curriculum: Taken from NABCEP PV Installation Professional Job Task Analysis

INDUSTRY SKILL OR CREDENTIAL	COMPANY AND EMPLOYEE	COMMITMENT TO TEACH	COMMITMENT TO ASSIST	FEEDBACK
Skills				
Verify client needs <i>Confirm location of equipment; Address aesthetic concerns</i>	Solar Contracting Company, Samantha R.		Contracting	
Review site survey <i>Evaluate roof condition; Evaluate desired array locations; Locate solar equipment; Locate conduit paths; Evaluate roof structure; Determine obstructions; Conduct site hazard assessment; Identify staging/lifting/access</i>	PV Firm, Maria L.	All skills in this section		PV Firm, Maria L. All skills in this section
Confirm system sizing <i>Arrange modules in mounting area</i>				
Review storage system design	Storage Solutions Inc, Henry F.			This is the most important skill for new hires—hard to find
Confirm string size calculations				
Review component selection <i>Confirm component compatibility</i>				
Review wiring/conduit calculations <i>Confirm conductor ampacity calcs; Confirm conduit fill calculations; Confirm conductor run distance; Confirm appropriate insulation type</i>	Storage Solutions Inc., Greg D.			Less important in new hire, already many with this skill
Review overcurrent protection				

INDUSTRY SKILL OR CREDENTIAL	COMPANY AND EMPLOYEE	COMMITMENT TO TEACH	COMMITMENT TO ASSIST	FEEDBACK
Skills (continued)				
Review fastener selection <i>Confirm fastener selection;</i> <i>Confirm env. conditions assessment;</i> <i>Confirm compatibility of fasteners;</i> <i>Confirm fastener types;</i> <i>Confirm pilot hole specs;</i> <i>Confirm fastener assembly</i>	Anna B.	Can teach any or all-available for 1/2 day		
Review plan sets				
Industry-Recognized Credentials				
NABCEP PV Installation Professional	John D., Susie R.			Main credential that they seek
Other skills recommended by employers:				