

Workplace Readiness

WorkSource enhances region's competitiveness

PARTNERS:

- Spokane Area Workforce Development Council
- Greater Spokane Incorporated
- Triumph Composite Systems
- Goodrich Corporation
- Kaiser Aluminum
- Community Colleges of Spokane
- Spokane Public Schools
- Medical Lake High School
- WorkSource Spokane
- Next Generation Zone

Spokane area companies looking to hire, now have a fast, effective way to measure an applicant's potential. At the same time, jobseekers can more quickly prove their value and land the job. The solution is a nationally recognized career-readiness credential that's part of the Work Ready Spokane initiative, launched by the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council in April 2011.

By encouraging the adoption of a standard assessment tool, the Work Ready initiative is creating a comprehensive workforce picture of the region recognized by potential employers across the nation, helpful to current and potential employees, and informative to the region's education and training system.

The WorkKeys assessment is a workplace skills test created by ACT—a national non-profit organization best known for its college-readiness assessment. The tests measure aptitude at reading, math and information gathering and can rate the test taker in terms of national performance. Scorers are able to earn a nationally recognized career readiness certificate, recognized and endorsed by industry authorities such as the National Association of Manufacturers.



Currently, three employers have contracted to have their job applicants tested at WorkSource, bringing jobseekers into the local employment office where additional services and training are available, including the free test-compatible KeyTrain remediation program. This close employer relationship is getting unemployed workers back into good paying jobs quickly while helping others connect with the training and placement services they'll need to be competitive for future job openings.

Between July 2010 and June 2011, WorkSource Spokane conducted WorkKeys job readiness assessments for more than 230 applicants, resulting in 42 job placements at Triumph Composite Systems. Many of these people were unemployed and would not have otherwise landed the job.

Spokane Skills Center and Medical Lake High School also are beginning to use the tests to help high school students measure their career readiness.

With help from Greater Spokane Incorporated, which brings together the Spokane Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council, along with the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council, Work Ready Spokane is working to expand employer use of the assessment tools.

CONTACT:

Dawn Karber
509.625.6213
dkarber@wdcspokane.com

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