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Subject: New ACT report explores nation's work readiness

Promotion

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One month ago, ACT issued a "Work Readiness Standards and Benchmarks" report that presented a first-ever definition of work readiness—an empirically-driven definition based on what is arguably the most extensive and detailed skills database in the world. Today we build on that foundation with "The Condition of Work Readiness in the United States." This report examines data collected from approximately 4 million ACT WorkKeys® examinees over the past 5 years and compares their skills with work readiness benchmarks for targeted high-growth, high-demand, and high-wage occupations for the next 8-10 years.

Some of the surprising findings:

- There is no significant gap between the skills needed for middle level education jobs and the skills possessed by middle level education examinees. The skills of individuals with middle-level education (at least 1 but less than 4 years of postsecondary education beyond high school) align with the work readiness requirements for middle-level education jobs. This finding suggests that, for the targeted occupations examined, middle education aligns with the work readiness requirements.
- Higher levels of education do not guarantee higher levels of work readiness. Education level does not always align with work readiness levels. Attaining the required education level for a job doesn't necessarily equip the individual with the work readiness skills needed for successful job performance. The largest gaps occur in locating information skills: the ability to locate, synthesize, and use information from workplace graphics.

This latest ACT report is the third in a series exploring the role of skills in today's job market and the growing importance skill levels play in predicting workplace success. The first report in the series, "A Better Measure of Skills Gaps," proposed a new approach to defining and measuring skills gaps.

Building on these three reports which focus on work readiness, ACT is preparing to lead a national conversation about the meaning and impact of career readiness in the next few months.

Download all three reports now free of charge at www.act.org/workreadiness

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