



## Building a Marketplace: Supply, Demand and Talent Management

### Overview

States and communities do not have enough skilled workers to fill existing jobs. Existing skills gaps and employers' concerns as to the availability of qualified future workers impact the economic development climate. There is also a great need to assist those citizens whose skills do not meet current market requirements. As the workforce ages, these problems will neither become less important – nor will the issues solve themselves.

This paper uses WI's recent study, BE BOLD 2, as a structure and guide to examine and address some of the identified challenges<sup>1</sup>.

“All of our research and hundreds of discussions with employers, workers and educators underscore the fact that Wisconsin needs to move quickly and boldly,” said Scott T. Vander-Sanden, president of AT&T Wisconsin and president of Competitive Wisconsin, Inc. (CWI). “We need to focus our strategic management. We need much more, much better actionable data. And, we need to let our employers and the rest of the world know, that Wisconsin understands the future of work and will have the talent they need, when they need it.”

The matrix below identifies the range of competencies that define jobs across three levels in any state. While current and future jobs will require academic, technical and behavioral skill sets the focus of the is paper is Learning Resources, Inc.'s (LRI) unique expertise: The legal and valid measurement and development of soft skills. LRI has enabled private and non-profit customers to assess over 4,000,000 people – incumbents, applicants and future workers.

<i>Job Type</i>	<b>Academic Skills</b>	<b>Technical Skills</b>	<b>Soft Skills</b>	P P R O F I S I O N A L E S I T Y T e s
<i>Basic or Entry Level</i>	CASAS, TABE or ABLE	NOCTI; MSSC; Industry-Specific Tests and Certificates; IT, ASE, AWS, NIMS; Prove It and others	<b>Workforce Readiness Skills</b>	
<i>High Wage and High Skills</i>	WorkKeys and CRC		<b>Workplace Success Skills</b>	
<i>Supervisor or 1st Line Manager</i>	Cognitive Tests		<b>Supervisory Skills</b>	

Wisconsin's study identifies the need for immediate action on three strategic fronts:

- Energizing the links between economic development and workforce/talent development;
- Revolutionizing and leveraging the collection of - and access to - real-time information about jobs, skill requirements, career pathways and economic outcomes; and,
- Mobilizing talent development and acquisition abilities in support of Wisconsin employers and promoting successes to attract talent and job creators to the state.

Opportunities and ongoing efforts within the framework of these fronts are the subject of this paper.

Wisconsin's study, BE BOLD 2: Growing Wisconsin's Talent Pool<sup>1</sup> calls for immediate action on seven goals:

### Goals and Opportunities

1. Enhance the ability of workers, employers, educators, trainers, economic development professionals and communities to respond to supply and demand changes in critical work-skill-clusters.

#### Opportunities

- Establishing a system that enables employers to better define the academic, technical and soft skills required of current, evolving and anticipated jobs.
- Workforce developers can help employers better understand the skills required of successful workers by using LRI's assessment programs to benchmark the skills of effective workers. Check-lists can also be used to identify behavioral skills believed to be critical for success.
- Once critical soft skills are identified, these competencies can/should become part of job-orders and job postings.
- When applicants' or incumbents' skill deficits are identified, the challenge is in remediating these soft skill gaps: LRI provides resources that support both pre- and post-employment skill development.
- Academic and technical training for new jobs benefits from rigorous curriculum development processes such as:
  - WIDS – Worldwide Instructional Design System, Ripon, WI; and,
  - DACUM (Developing a Curriculum), The Ohio State University.

Note The matrix above identifies three basic levels of work. To a large extent, soft skill competencies (unlike technical skills) tend to be similar across sectors. Data basing these competencies makes this information available across and within sectors.

2. Develop a comprehensive talent supply and demand projection for Wisconsin that examines the skills required by employer groups.
  - Demand projections are not part of this paper.
  - Talent supply data currently exist but it is not gathered in ways that support either individuals or employers.

Note Currently, people receive transcripts, certificates and other competence-related credentials; however, this information is not organized to best serve either the individual or employers.

- An effective system captures – lifelong - the growing knowledge, skills and abilities in the competency columns in Overview.
- Transcripts of technical and academic skills can be included
- LRI assessments report on a person's effective soft skills (and those requiring further development). Effective behaviors relevant to people's life-long and growing soft skill competencies are also listed.

An effective data base would provide a means for employers to search for individuals with a specific set of competencies. It would also enable individuals with particular competencies to search for jobs that require those skills.

3. Develop a comprehensive real-time workforce/talent data warehouse in the nation.

Such a warehouse would create a market place where employers seek out documented talent and individuals see employers looking for their talent-mix.

4. Develop a mobile application that provides job and career information on demand to everyone.
  - LinkedIn, Monster and other organizations may already have systems in place which, when adjusted, may meet WI's needs.
  - Mobile applications can also support the assessment process. In addition to having soft skills assessment programs on-line or on DVDs, some are also available for tablet (I-PAD and Android) delivery.
5. Leverage real-time data, innovation and educational and training best practices to maximize benefits from world-class education and training systems, which empow citizens to engage in lifelong learning that enhances employability and employment security.
  - LRI's ability to report skills' growth and skills' development requirements support this goal.
  - LRI's technology also provides employers with behavioral interview guides to confirm or probe applicants' soft skills competence.
6. Support internships and experiential learning in targeted skill sets by enabling youth to enter the world of work by encouraging employers to align internships, apprenticeships and applied learning programs with the skill clusters roadmap.
  - Soft skills development works best when the competencies are integrated into academic and career/technical learning curricula and activities; this is often called the I-BEST model.
  - LRI also provides guidance and focus for on-the-job learning growth and measurement.
7. Alert employers and workers to the state's ability to supply job creators in the United States and worldwide with the best, rightly-skilled talent in the world.
  - The tools and processes identified above provide credible and valid data that can be incorporated into chosen alerts.

The comprehensive systems called for in BE BOLD 2 do not exist in any state. And, as the above Opportunities suggest, components of the ultimate design - the soft skills elements – do exist and some are already in use in WI.

### Closing

- If your organization has initiatives underway; and/or,
- If you would like to learn more about the assessment/development tools identified above,

### **Please contact:**

Alan Lesure, President, Learning Resources, Inc.  
[alesure@learning-resources.com](mailto:alesure@learning-resources.com); Phone: 203-637-5047

<sup>1</sup>This document draws heavily upon "BE BOLD 2: Growing Wisconsin's Talent Pool" Study. The seven goals identified above are taken directly from this document. Additional information on WI's effort can be obtained from Competitive Wisconsin, Inc., 22 North Carroll Street, Suite 200 Madison, WI 53703: phone: 608.258.8411 / fax: 608.258.1578

V7-10-26-12