



ALIGNING

Employers' Skill Requirements and Applicants' Competencies

Premise

- Every job requires a mix of soft, technical and academic skills.
- National research documents that there are common cores of different soft skills required of entry-level, high skill or leadership jobs.
- An absence of key soft skills often precludes growth within an organization and, frequently, it leads to costly turnover.
- Hiring is local: If employers better-define the skills they require, individuals with those skills will have a competitive advantage and a higher likelihood of being hired and succeeding on the job.

Process

Employers

- Identify or benchmark which skills are most important to them
- Communicate that information to programs developing future workers
- Research documents that individuals with the soft skills required for success on-the-job are more quickly proficient and they turnover less.
- Soft skills development can continue post-employment.

Workforce and Educational Developers

- Soft skills take time to develop.
- Programs focusing on remediating the skill-gaps identified by comparing assessed future-workers' effective soft skills with those identified as important by employers are more effective.
- Through education, training and work-experience, learners reduce their soft skill deficits and document and/or credential their effective behaviors.
- Experience shows that an approach that integrates soft skills development into academic and technical courses and into training and work-experience is especially effective; this practice is often referred to as I-Best. Post-assessment documents how effective this process is.

Applicants

- Individuals applying for jobs under the above system have more of the skills employers seek.

Opportunity

1. Would better alignment of demand and supply provide a competitive advantage for your organization and the individuals and employers you serve?
2. Might employers respond to the opportunity to benchmark or otherwise identify the specific competencies they seek in future workers?
3. Would your organization then take on the challenge of addressing individuals' soft skill deficits?
4. Is there a sector or are there clusters of employers where this approach might be tested in your community?

To discuss the above, please contact Al Lesure: alesure@learning-resources.com