

Joining Forces and Making Connections at the Upper Great Lakes Summit



James Baker, Director of Technology Partnerships at Michigan Technological University and MI-SBDTC Board Member, Candice Lauk, Timber Products of Iron Mountain, Inc., Stacey Wrecks, Timber Products of Iron Mountain, Inc., Jim Beauchamp, Senior Business Consultant MI-SBTDC.

Upper Great Lakes Summit – Connecting Economic, Legislative, Education and Workforce Development, held at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Michigan marked the first time for this event.

The 2011 Summit, held at the end of September, was all new but carried on the tradition of two successful annual events. The U.P. Education Legislative Summit concluded its 14th year in 2010 and the Upper Great Lakes Economic & Workforce Development Summit held its 5th annual event last year. This joining of forces added additional value to this high powered event and helped to make an important connection between business and education.

Speakers Yong Zhao and John Twomey were keynotes for the day and shared valuable information with guests at the summit. Zhao shared his ideas on student achievement and the effect on an economy, based on his extensive international experience. He pointed out that while U.S. students are scoring lower on tests they are developing more advanced skills that require creativity and ingenuity and those factors have a more positive effect on our economy than high standardized test scores.

John Twomey, director of NYATEP, New York's Workforce Association discussed changes affecting the Country's, the State's and the U.P.'s workforce. He covered items including the effects of the recession, offshoring and technological replacement, demographic shifts, good literacy skills:

why they matter more today and the huge payoff we get with education.

Attendees were also treated to a panel discussion with members of our legislature as well as informative breakout sessions with key stakeholders from our region. Breakout sessions included: Emergency Financial Management, Talent Supply and Demand, Student Technology Displays and a presentation from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

The day was filled to the brim with information and discussions on many important topics but attendees also took time to recognize a local business and local educator. Timber Products of Iron Mountain, Inc. was recognized as the Best Small Business for the Upper Peninsula Region by the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC). Thirteen businesses from around the State were honored for the Best Small Business Awards and were selected from over 16,000 companies that the MI-SBTDC provided with confidential counseling and training last year.

Dr. Stephen L. Pierson, Superintendent of Ishpeming Schools and a member of the conference planning committee was recognized for his 14 years of service to the UP Education/Legislative summit serving as emcee for the event for those years. Operation Action U.P. was recognized as a ten-year sponsor for the event with Brett French accepting on behalf of the organization.

For follow-up information on the Summit visit www.jobforce.org.

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In The Spotlight



Art Menard discusses the methods and equipment used by the car shop to repair and upgrade railroad cars during tours at the open house.

The Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad (E & LS Railroad) is known affectionately to its crew as 'the best kept secret in Delta County.' That secret was exposed Friday at an open house to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the firm's car shop, which repairs and restores rail cars for private owners and railroad companies. State, county and city officials, as well as community leaders from the region, were treated to remarks by railroad officials, a tour of the current car shop facility and networking over lunch, catered by the Buck Inn. The success of the Car Shop is

E & LS Railroad Celebrates 20th Anniversary Of Car Shop With Proposed Expansion

By Alyssa Nugent, Delta County EDA

based on a partnership between the Escanaba and Lake Superior Railroad and SOFTEK Contractual Services, Inc., known as SCSi (pronounced Scuzzi). John Larkin, President of E&LS Railroad, had the vision to capitalize on the skilled workforce of the area and partner with many local vendors and suppliers to further enhance the area's economy. He then collaborated with Gary Micheau, President of SCSi beginning in 1993, two years after the shop opened, to further employee training and development with the help of Michigan Works!, M-TEC and Bay College. The full Car Shop now consists of a repair facility at Building 20 in the former Harnischfeger facility and a paint and cure shop in Wells.

Mike Logan, Manager of Car Shop Operations and Marketing, shared that in 2006, when he transferred to the car repair facility, there was one shift, one customer and seventeen employees. The shop now runs three shifts and employs 67 individuals, performing rail car repairs for the top eight private car owners in the nation. According to Logan, at the beginning of 2011, the shop had 700 cars to repair for the year; as of Friday, they have repaired over 800 cars and have 11 different contracts with an additional 900 cars that need to be repaired. Gary Micheau, President of SCSi, spoke on the growth of employees, sharing proudly that according to Michigan Works! records, SCSi is one of the top military veteran employers in Delta County with between 20 and 25% of their workforce comprised of veterans.

One of those veterans is Shop Foreman, as well as SCSi's most senior employee, Art Menard. Art discussed how the U.P.'s famous work

ethic makes the shop one of the top in the nation, as well as discussing how he works to mold employees into successful tradespeople. He explained that while people may come in as a welder or a laborer, they have the opportunity over a 3 to 5 year time frame to become an experienced Railroad Carman.

Besides an anniversary celebration, the day also spoke to expansion and a boost to the Delta County Economy. In February, a third shift was added to help keep up all projects that the shop has running. Multiphase plans are in the works to expand the facility, potentially enclosing rail lines on one side of the shop allowing for additional covered space to complete work. The expansion would also include spurs on the other side of the building for additional car storage. Rail car storage on the E & LS continues to be strong, with cars being stored between leases, and before and after being repaired. When a car is leased to a new vendor, many times upgrades and repairs must be made to the car, generating more income for the shop. This planned expansion will add 20 new full-time jobs, as well as jobs for local vendors who must expand, as well, according to Logan.

The Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad is currently working with city, state and federal officials to secure cost-effective funding on the proposed and much-needed expansion of the facility. The firm will work with Michigan Works! and M-TEC as in the past for recruiting, training and development of employees. More information will be forthcoming as the railroad begins further development.

Mather Nursing Center: Over 25 Years of Excellence

When Mather Nursing Center of Ishpeming needs to find staff, Michigan Works! is the first place they call. For over 8 years Michigan Works! has been assisting Mather Nursing Center in finding qualified employees for their full-service facility. Mather has utilized Michigan Works! services to meet their staffing needs for everything from part-time maintenance personnel to highly trained medical professionals. The staff at Michigan Works! has assisted with creating job descriptions as well as providing application materials for interested candidates.

"I just wanted to let you know how much we at Mather appreciate your business, help and kindness at MI Works!. When we need something,

whether it be in 5 minutes or 5 days, yourself and your team is right on the ball. We have had many great new employees come on board with us, that you have recommended by MI Works!. We thank you for your great service, kind staff and efforts in helping us at Mather with the hiring process" Tammy O'Brien, Human Resources/Payroll/AP

Mather Nursing Center has been in operation for over 25 years offering short-term rehabilitation and long-term eldercare services. They maintain a staff that includes Registered and Licensed Practical Nurses, Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists and Registered Dietitians. Additional services include Dental,

Podiatry, Psychiatric and other medical specialists as needed. Mather Nursing Center prides itself on its commitment to improving the comfort, strength, mobility and independence of its residents and patients.





(Photo Courtesy of Northern Waters Photography/Sean Depuydt)

Will Carne

President Michigan Works! The Job Force Board

The Upper Peninsula Healthcare Roundtable (UPHCRT) Conference is scheduled for November 10, 2011 at Northern Michigan University. This year's conference theme is "Innovation in Healthcare through Technology". Speakers will include Susan Makela,

Healthcare Roundtable Conference Supports Upward Initiative

Director of the Upper Peninsula Telehealth of Marquette General Health Systems. The technology focus will encompass electronic medical records, distance education, community support, physician use legal consideration and future applications such as telephone. Breakout sessions have been designed based on last year's feedback from the conference attendees will include exercise impact, health insurance and rehabilitation services.

This conference affords the Roundtable members to promote one of the UPWARD Initiative Strategies of supporting the use of telemedicine. Members want the community to know about the advantages and use of telehealth in their local communities. The conference will showcase the work of the Upper Peninsula Telehealth Network that has been in existence since 1995 to help consumers access quality health care.

"As you know, technology has vastly changed the way we do business. Healthcare is no exception. This conference will offer insight into how technology is transforming healthcare services in our region", states Al Hendra, UPHCRT Chair.

For more information on the Upper Peninsula Healthcare Roundtable, contact Deb Doyle at 906.789.0558, ext. 245.



Welcome, Russell Sexton, Job Force Board Member



Newly appointed member to The Job Force Board, Russell Sexton is no stranger to the Michigan Works! System. Russ has worked for the Department of Human Services since 1988 and currently oversees Delta, Dickinson and Menominee Counties as the County Director. As Director, Russ is responsible for the implementation and efficient operation of an array of financial assistance and social service programs, as established within the department under federal, state and county authority.

"I see my role as a Job Force Board member as a continuum of the partnership that already exists between DHS and The Job Force Board," Russ comments. "This partnership is integral in our work toward providing welfare clients with job skills and job opportunities so they can become independent of welfare. It is also an opportunity for me to become more familiar with the businesses and other employers in our UP / Northeastern Wisconsin community, which would further assist me with helping our clients."

Mr. Sexton also plays an active role on the Collaborative Boards for Delta, Dickinson and Menominee counties as well as the

4C of the UP Board. "I see value in this partnership, as well as the other partnerships we have through the Delta County Family Coordinating Council and other various work groups and boards. I feel that the more communication there is between all of the organizations, the better we can work together to meet the needs of those we work with as well as meeting the needs of the organizations themselves."

Russ has a BA in Sociology from Western Michigan University, has served 19 years in the US Air Force Reserves and 4 years active US Air Force. He resides in Delta County with his wife, Leah and is a proud father of 2 children - daughter, Megan and son, Ryan.

Thank you, Russ, for your dedication to the Job Force Board and its Michigan Works! Service Center System.

Timber Industry Important To Our Economy



Michigan leads the nation in timber surplus – that amount of new annual forest growth that is not harvested according to US Forest Service statistics. Clearly fiber supply is available, yet it is not currently being managed across the state in a manner to effectively utilize the resource for the social, economic, and environmental well-being of Michigan’s residents.

Michigan’s forests contribute significantly to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of its citizens. There are over 1,400 forest products manufacturing facilities in Michigan, with more than an additional 1,700 business units related to forest products manufacturing (logging companies, consulting foresters, whole-

salers). One out of every ten manufacturing jobs in Michigan is accounted for by the forest products industry. When considering direct and indirect effects of the industry on the state’s economy, the total economic benefit of the forest products industry is greater than \$12 billion and represents over 150,000 jobs. The value of Michigan’s forests can be divided into distinct sectors – manufacturing, timber lands, and forest recreation. In most rural communities, the forest products industry is the leading employer and largest economic contributor.

Despite this important role that the forest products industry plays in Michigan’s economy, the industry has suffered as a direct result of the economic downturn in Midwest manufacturing of the past several years. The direct result of this downturn has been the loss of over 20,000 jobs, \$700 million in wages and over 300 individ-

ual businesses/manufacturing facilities from the forest products industry. Indirect losses amount to much more when considering the loss of jobs, wages, and businesses related to the procurement, manufacture, and distribution of wood-based products.

The forest products industry’s stability is vitally important across the state, but especially critical in maintaining healthy economies in the rural communities that rely on the forest products industry. Currently the UPWard Initiative’s Natural Resources Committee is working on a seven part plan to support the forest products industry as well as wind and mining. Please join us in this most important work. For more information contact Holly Peoples at 280-2441 or Vicki Schwab at 786-2192.



Measure Skills and Abilities of Potential Workers

SkillCheck has more than 800 Skills and Behavior Tests Available!

Michigan Works! has access to a suite of more than 800 skills and behavior tests with SkillCheck. The range of performance- and knowledge-based questions enables us to address your precise business, educational or training needs. SkillCheck also provides affordable new time-adaptive tests that cut pre-employment testing time. Tests are available on stand-alone PCs, or can be made available over networks.

Skills and Behavioral Tests include:

- Accounting and Finance Tests
- Basic Skills
- Behavioral Tests
- Call Center Tests
- Clerical Office Tests
- Computing Tests
- Essentials
- Food Service Tests
- Industrial Skills Tests
- IT Skills Tests
- Legal Tests
- Medical Office Tests
- Nursing Tests
- Retail Sales Tests
- Software Skills Tests
- Staffing and HR Knowledge Tests
- Talent Scout’s Time-Adaptive Tests
- Typing/ Data Entry / Transcription Tests



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National Entrepreneurship Campaign Inspires Local Students To Create Their Own Jobs

Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour Features Workshops, Keynotes By Country's Top Young Entrepreneurs



The Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour (EET) visited Escanaba High School on October 12th to expose students and community members to the opportunities of entrepreneurship and to help them explore ways they can help change the economy, create jobs for themselves and pursue their passions.

The Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour – the first ever collegiate entrepreneur tour – includes keynotes, exhibits, workshops, and question-and-answer sessions led by the country's most successful young entrepreneurs. The Tour was created in 2006 by two twenty-somethings to expose young people to entrepreneurship. In more than 200 events in 35 states, the tour has featured many of the country's top young entrepreneurs who have built or sold successful companies for over \$1 million before the age of 30.

In partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Campaign for Free Enterprise, the Tour intends to inspire students to look at entrepreneurship as a viable career path.

"We need to create 20 million jobs in this decade to replace the ones that were lost in the last one" said Arel Moodie, co-owner of EET. "We have found that students from Delta County and others in surrounding counties aren't waiting to be bailed out. They are serving as critical forces to help us meet the 20 million job challenge."

Prospective entrepreneurs should be inspired, not intimidated, by the current economic climate, according to Michael Simmons, co-founder of the Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour. "More than half the companies on the 2009 Fortune 500 list were launched during a recession or bear market." Simmons said, "Technology and global-

ization have made it very inexpensive to start a business. Now is the best time to become your own boss."

"We believe students have the ingenuity, entrepreneurial spirit, and drive to create the innovative solutions needed to meet today's challenges," said Stan Anderson, Chairman of the Campaign for Free Enterprise. "The Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour is about leveraging the creativity of young people to be part of the solution in our effort to create jobs in America."

"We are excited to bring back this high energy, high impact presentation to our community! We had over 200 people attend the last event in March 2010. This event resulted in local youth considering entrepreneurship as a meaningful career option. This year we have youth who started their first business as exhibitors and we have Alyssa Diebolt as a panel member talking about her entrepreneurial efforts. Alyssa used her fused glass business as a means to pay for college and she now employs her parents. There will be many more success stories like Alyssa's because of events like this and the efforts of local educators, youth serving organizations and collaborative endeavors" says Wil Carne, Owner of Carnes BP and President of Michigan Works! The Job Force Board.

This event was brought to our communities through efforts of the dedicated team members of the Delta-Schoolcraft Youth Entrepreneurship Alliance. Funding was provided by the Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth through a grant written by Michigan Works! The Job Force Board.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

November 2, 2011

Business After Hours

Rio Tinto

Time: 5:00-7:00pm EST

For More Information Please Call Lake Superior Community Partnership at 906.226.6591 ext. 106

November 3, 2011

UPEDA Membership Meeting

Location: Bay College West, Iron Mountain

For More Information please

visit www.upeda.org or call

(906) 789-3605 to register!

November 7, 2011

Bay Area Economic Club

Speaker: Frank Shepherd, founder, former Chairman and CEO of company

21st Century Newspaper

Location: Bay College Joseph Heirman Center

Time: Networking & Hors d'oeuvres

5:15pm EST; Speaker 6:15pm EST

For more information please call Sheila

Hughes at the Delta County Chamber

of Commerce 906.786.2192

November 7, 2011

Economic Club of Marquette

Speaker: Ernesto Sirolli, Founder/ CEO Sirolli Institute

Location: Ramada Inn of Marquette

Time: Social: 6:00pm Dinner: 7:00pm

Presentation: 8:00pm EST

For more information call 906-228-

6000 ext 230 or go to their website

www.marquetteeconomicclub.org

November 9, 2011

JRJ Food Equipment

Time: 5:00-7:00pm EST

For More Information Please Call Lake Superior

Community Partnership at 906.226.6591 ext. 106

November 14, 2011

Toastmasters

Location: Peninsula Medical Center,

1414 West Fair, MQT

Time: 6:30-8:00pm EST

For More Information Call 906.360.9765 or

visit www.superiorlandtoastmasters.org

November 28, 2011

Toastmasters

Location: Peninsula Medical Center,

1414 West Fair, MQT

Time: 6:30-8:00pm EST

For More Information Call 906.360.9765 or

visit www.superiorlandtoastmasters.org

Talent Supply, Talent Demand

The Upper Peninsula Michigan Works! agencies along with the Upper Peninsula Economic

Development Alliance and the UPWard Initiative membership has recently published a State of the Workforce Report to provide an up-to-date view of the workforce in the Upper Peninsula. The report provides a strategic analysis of workforce trends, opportunities, and the current status of actions underway to strengthen the economic viability of our region.

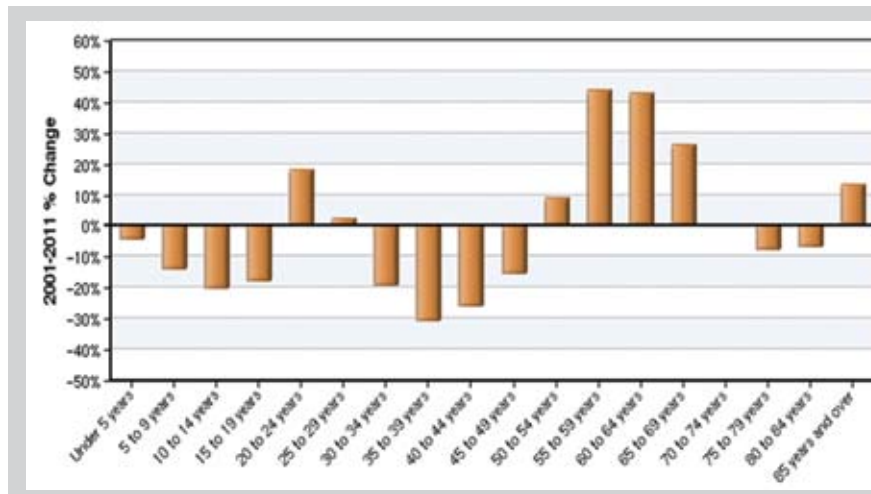
This report provides a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the region's labor market and workforce development challenges to present a clear picture of the current status of a range of elements that are central to understanding important workforce and workplace issues. This report offers analysis of challenges and opportunities suggest by the work of the UPWard Initiative workgroups and they implement the strategies outlined in the 2009 Regional Innovation Grant Study and work of the regional workforce boards in implementing the regionally adopted strategic workforce plan.

A sample of data available in the report includes demographics about the make-up of our workforce.

Additional information is provided as to why the information is important. In this instance, the age mix of the workforce points at several challenges and opportunities, retirements will continue to grow, our region lacks a solid base of workers between 35-54, entry-level jobs may be

among the hardest to fill given the small portion of 18-34 year olds in our region and census data raises concern for an adequate worker pipeline.

Additional information on Talent Supply, Talent Demand and Education and Training are provided. The authors of this document intend for it to be a fluid document that will be updated on a regular basis. To review the report on-line go to www.jobforce.org.



Individuals 50-69 years old had the biggest growth rate in population in this region from 2001 through 2011. The biggest decline occurred in the age group of 30 - 49 years old. The average median age for this region is 40.8 years. All counties in the region showed an increase in the median age except the counties of Baraga, Houghton and Marquette.

Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance Membership Meeting

Economic development practitioners and partners gathered at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge recently for professional development and networking as part of Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance's quarterly meeting. Scott Byrnes and Lisa Kotler from Northern Initiatives (NI) kicked off the morning with a wealth of information on their lending programs and Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC). NI serves 46 counties in Michigan and 5 in Wisconsin. They have a variety of lending products such as microloans and small business loans, they also work with loan guarantees and USDA business and industry loans. They have recovery and modernization loans available to Profit Mastery graduates and those loans require a job creation component. Businesses can access coaching and other business development resources as well. Businesses can access training in Quick Books, market research and web site development and optimization.

The MMTC has a number of areas of expertise available to manufacturers in the region including: Initial evaluation, performance benchmarking, operational assessment, lean business solutions, quality management systems and tools, six sigma, environmental management systems, green manufacturing, cost identification and control, market diversification, website development and solution selling.

Amy Clickner from Lake Superior Commu-

nity Partnership shared information on the UP Collaborative Development Council (UPCDC). The UPCDC is currently working regionally to implement Salesforce, a customer relationship management system across the UP. They are also working to implement Location One software which is a site selection tracking system. They are also connecting with the Pure Michigan Campaign and working closely with MEDC on deployment of resources. LSCP will be housing a staff person and a variety of local EDOS will be utilizing that position.

Jake Steinhauer from Michigan Works! Presented information on Economic Modeling Specialists Incorporated (EMSI). EMSI provides tools and data to understand employment and the local labor market as well as research and reports to analyze education and the economy. Reports are available upon request by contacting Jake at 906-789-0558.

Wade Carter from GS Engineering gave an update on the company. GS Engineering is an agile small business focused on design and analysis services, vehicle testing, prototype development and lightweight material R&D. GS Engineering was incorporated in 2001 as the inaugural spin-off company under the Michigan Tech Enterprise Corporation SmartZone program. Glen Simula started GS Engineering to apply advanced technology developed during his past 19 years at the Keweenaw Research Cen-

ter, Michigan Technological University, to solve commercial and military engineering problems. GS Engineering initially began with 3 employees working from their homes. GS Engineering has grown to nearly 70 full-time employees. GS Engineering's customers include the Department of Energy, Department of Defense clients, leading vehicle manufacturers, and material development companies.

Ian McMillan from Tourism SSMEDC provided information on tourism efforts in Sault Ste. Marie Canada. They are working to attract investment in the community through tourism. They provide marketing support and research to tourism development. Tourism can supply the "lifestyle" component that can assist in attracting companies to the region and be a key source of funding for community projects.

The next UPEDA meeting will be held November 3rd at Bay West's Fornetti Center from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm CST.



Aviation Seminar Takes Flight

On September 22nd an Aviation Industry Overview was held at the Michigan Works! Service Center in Marquette. The seminar was sponsored by the Upper Michigan Green Aviation Coalition (UMIGAC) and supported by the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC). Attendees included a broad spectrum from a wide geographical area including a CEO/President of a Helicopter Manufacturing firm to persons interested in starting a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Repair Station. The guest speaker for the event was Roy Resto, a recognized industry expert and consultant.

Mr. Resto is the President of Aviation Industry Management Solutions Consulting and an FAA Designated Airworthiness Representative. With his experience working for Messier-Bugatti-Tracer, American Airlines, McDonnell Douglas and as an Avionics Specialist for the Air Force with the 128th Air Refueling Wing in Milwaukee, he provide a unique insight to the aviation industry. Additionally, Mr. Resto has served on the FAA Suspected Unapproved Parts Steering Committee and the Aviation Suppliers Association Board of Directors.

The seminar included overviews of the aviation industry, forecasts, an introduction to the

FAA regulations and an overview of how to start and staff an FAA Repair Station to perform maintenance, repair, and overhaul of aircraft parts. The session presentations were lively and entertaining, with laughs and an abundance of information on how to start or grow a business in the aviation industry. According to presented forecasts from the FAA, Boeing and Airbus among others; aviation manufacturing, passenger travel and spending for maintenance by the military and civilian sectors are all poised to grow. According to Resto: "The Upper Peninsula with its wealth of underutilized industrial talent and capacity, represents an untapped resource for firms and persons wishing to start or expand their aviation businesses."

Mr. Resto with assistance from Don Makowski, PTAC Procurement Counselor, provided instructions on how to set up a firm to do business with the government and/or military. During the government contracting discussions, time was spent talking about the importance of quality systems and complying with military specifications and standards.

The mission of the Upper Michigan Green Aviation Coalition is to join private and public sector partners across the Upper Peninsula of

Michigan and bordering regions with experts from throughout the world, to develop new business opportunities; create jobs; develop new employee categories; promote investment; develop and commercialize advanced technologies; promote collaboration among cluster partners; and expand existing third-party business and financing services within the field of green aviation. For more information about UMIGAC contact them at (906)346-3333 or info@migreenaviation.com

The PTAC is a not-for-profit organization providing no cost government contracting assistance to small businesses. For more information about services provided by the PTAC, contact Don Makowski at (906)789-0558x244 or dmakowsk@jobforce.org



Standardize Employee Testing WorkKeys Documents and Improves Workplace Skills

Job Profiling

Businesses use WorkKeys job profiling to analyze the skills needed for specific jobs in their organizations. The profiles offer a concrete way for the businesses to describe the skills they need for particular jobs. Job applicants can use their WorkKeys scores to determine how their skills measure up to those required. Educators can see how well they are preparing graduates for the work world in different occupations. WorkKeys profiles are completed by ACT-authorized Michigan Works! Human Resource Specialists.

Assessments

Soft skills – the ability to learn, listen, communicate, work in teams and solve problems – are important assets for any worker, regardless of career choice. WorkKeys measures these abilities, and businesses use the assessments to measure the skills of current and prospective employees and to compare their scores to job profile requirements when making hiring, promotion, and training decisions.

Benefits for Businesses

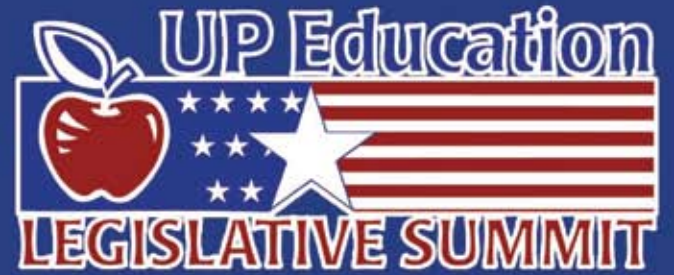
- Take the guesswork out of the hiring process
- Define clear skill requirements for specific jobs
- Establish legal defensibility in the selection process
- Ensure that candidates have the skills employers need
- Determine where job applicants and/or employees need additional training to meet job skill requirements
- Develop focused training initiatives
- Reduce turnover, overtime and waste
- Use the system to meet ISO 9000 standards and ensure quality business practices
- This 12-minute test accurately measures a candidate's ability to learn a specific job, solve problems, understand instructions and apply knowledge to new situations

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