

The NCRC™ and Job Requirements

After two decades of collecting data generated by the WorkKeys system, we at ACT have built a rich data set about foundational job skill requirements across many industries. JobPro™, ACT’s proprietary database of occupational information, represents a one-of-a-kind repository of data describing the tasks, skills, and skill requirements established by more than 18,000 job analysis studies. The common language of the WorkKeys system creates linkages between JobPro and abundant examinee data produced by administering more than 15 million WorkKeys assessments.

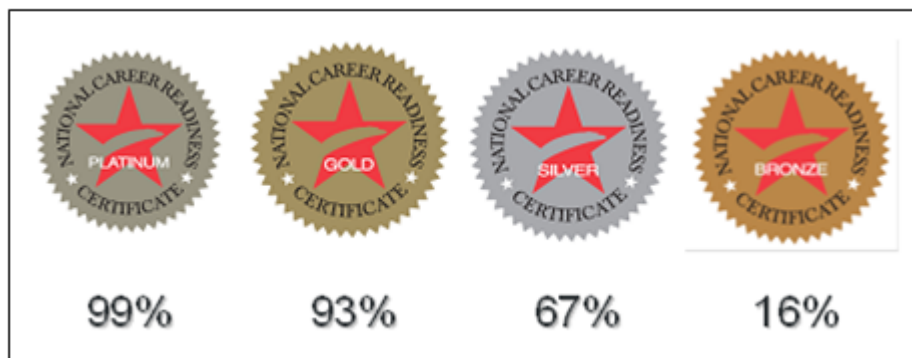
Linking these data sets creates a unique perspective on skill supply and demand forces within the workforce, one that is useful to individuals, employers, workforce and economic developers, and policy makers. ACT data also help individuals connect with jobs, enable employers to identify qualified applicants, facilitate standards for jobs and training programs, and serve as an indicator of career and work readiness.

The multi-level National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC™) is based on the WorkKeys system and its linked data sets. This allows ACT to estimate the number of jobs – and percentage of profiled jobs – that certificate recipient is certain to be qualified to hold. A WorkKeys score indicates the ability to perform skills associated with a specific skill level and all of the levels that precede it; a Level 6 score on Reading for Information reports the ability to perform skills that are associated with Levels 6, as well as Levels 3-5.

A platinum-level NCRC requires minimum scores of 6 on three assessments, so the individual who earns this credential would meet the score requirements for any job requiring level scores of 6 or lower in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information. Similarly, the recipient of a Gold NCRC would qualify for all occupations requiring level scores of 5 or below in these three WorkKeys skill areas.

This approach yields the following breakdown by certificate level.

Information provided in the chart should be interpreted as “Individuals with a Silver NCRC have the essential foundational skills needed for 67 percent of jobs.”



Indeed, this information is helpful to economic developers and community leaders when discussing the aggregate skill level of individuals and communities. Broadly, certificate levels across a labor shed afford a view into how qualified the *entire workforce* is for a wide range of jobs.

But employers may wish to drill down to the individual score report to determine how qualified an *individual* is for a specific job.

ACT's JobPro data base also collects skill requirement information for thousands of individual job titles, and reports that information in the form of occupational profiles. An occupational profile (see chart below) lists a job title with the average skill level required in Applied Math, Reading for Information and Locating Information. Employers who do not conduct customized job profiles may rely on these occupational profiles for general guidance on the skill levels required -- and they may review and individual's WorkKeys score report to understand how a job seeker's skills align with the job itself.

Table: Foundational skills required for top 20 employing manufacturing careers

O*Net-Code	Occupation	Locating Information (Range 3-6)	Reading for Information (Range 3-7)	Applied Mathematics (Range 3-7)
53-7062.00	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers	4	3	3
11-1021.00	General & Operations Managers	4	5	5
41-4012.00	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing	4	4	5
51-2092.00	Team Assemblers	4	3	3
43-5071.00	Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks	4	3	3
53-7064.00	Packers & Packagers, Hand	3	3	3
51-1011.00	First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	4	4	4
53-7051.00	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	3	3	3
49-1011.00	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, & Repair	5	5	4
51-9061.00	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	4	4	3
41-4011.00	Sales Representatives, Technical & Scientific	4	4	4
51-9198.00	Helpers--Production Workers	4	3	3
51-4041.00	Machinists	4	4	4
11-2022.00	Sales Managers	5	5	4
51-4121.07	Solderers & Brazers	3	3	3
51-4121.06	Welders, Cutters, & Welder Fitters	4	3	3
51-4121.00	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	4	3	3
51-9111.00	Packaging & Filling Machine Operators & Tenders	4	3	3
49-9041.00	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	4	4	4
13-1023.00	Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, & Farm Products	4	4	3

For more information on the WorkKeys system, visit www.act.org/workkeys/