



NW Natural

- Local Gas Distribution Company
- 680,000 customers located in Oregon and SW Washington
- Own and operate gas storage facilities
- Maintain and operate over 13,900 miles of gas main
- Provide gas service to 124 cities and neighboring communities
- 1050 employees with over 600 are union



How did it all get started?

- 2002 NW Natural and OPEIU Local 11 worked together to find a new way of setting minimum qualifications
- Driving forces were high washout rates and traditional practices that leads to turnover
- Assure internal candidates for job promotions had the necessary skills to be successful
- We settled on ACT and the Work Keys assessments as our pathway



Implementation

- Profiling all jobs
 - Trained three profilers
 - Established Qualifications Work Teams to set standards
 - Negotiated within our collective bargaining agreement
- Communications
- Consolidation of Job descriptions and creation of job families (59 job titles down from over 175)



Results

- Reduction in washout rate was significant
- Productivity improved
- Reduced training time
- Employees are more confident in their ability to succeed
- Fewer test drives
- Employee opportunity for skilling up/career development paths
- Employee confidence is enhanced



Other interesting outcomes

- Initially employees wanted to set the levels very high
- Test anxiety was very high at first
- The company needed to build up its career center to accommodate demand from employees
- It did not diminish our ability to meet our diversity goals
- Our experience shows that employees meeting the minimum standards are much more likely to succeed



How is it going now?

- NW Natural now prefers NCRC for all incoming new applicants.
- Anyone entering the company must take the full assessment test and meet the minimums before job offer
- The most common reason new employees fail is not because they cant do the work its because they lack the soft skills!



Ongoing in Oregon

- The right people in the right jobs with the right skills
- A House Bill was passed to require the Oregon Workforce Investment Board implement the NCRC
- Its an economic development tool
- Good for Job seekers as well as for employers
- Helps make us competitive in a more global marketplace
- Over 6,000 certificates issued on our way to 100K



Questions



*A tool to help Oregon businesses
of any industry, size and location
build and maintain a skilled workforce.*



Oregon's
NCRC

National Career
Readiness Certificate

Oregon's
NCRC

NATIONAL
CAREER READINESS
CERTIFICATE

Presentation to: Medford Employer Council,
Grant's Pass Employer Council
March 29, 2011

Presented by:

René Léger, E3: Employers for Education Excellence

Suz Montemayor, Motorcycle Superstore (Medford)

Bryan Gooch Redd, Jefferson State Forest Products (Grant's Pass)

Dave Williams, NW Natural (by telephone)

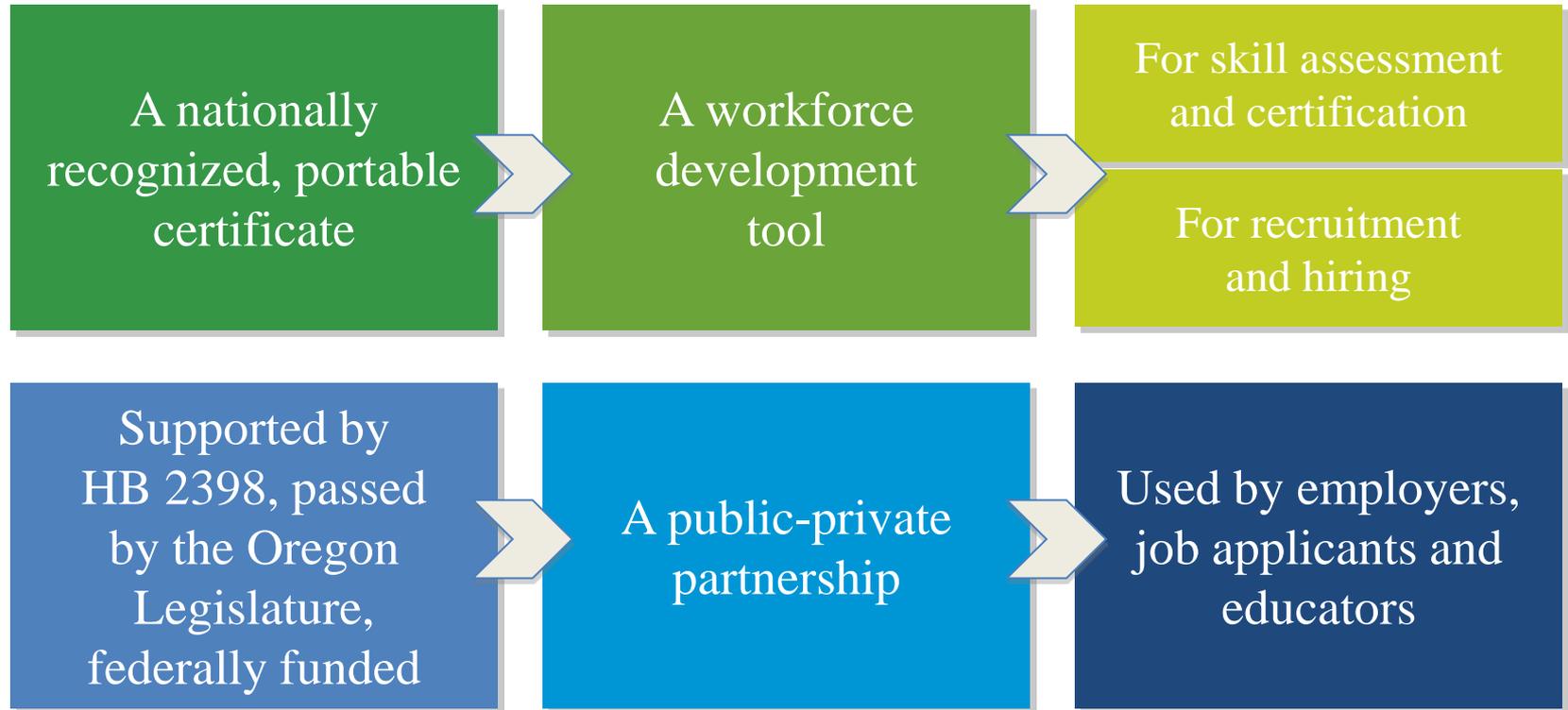
What is the effect of the current economy?

The challenge faced by employers and job applicants:

- Slow recovery that is largely jobless
- Job screening is more time-consuming
 - Applicants outnumber openings
 - Variable skill levels & trainability
- Imperative of a productive workforce
 - Staying in business
 - Competing in a global marketplace



Oregon's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)

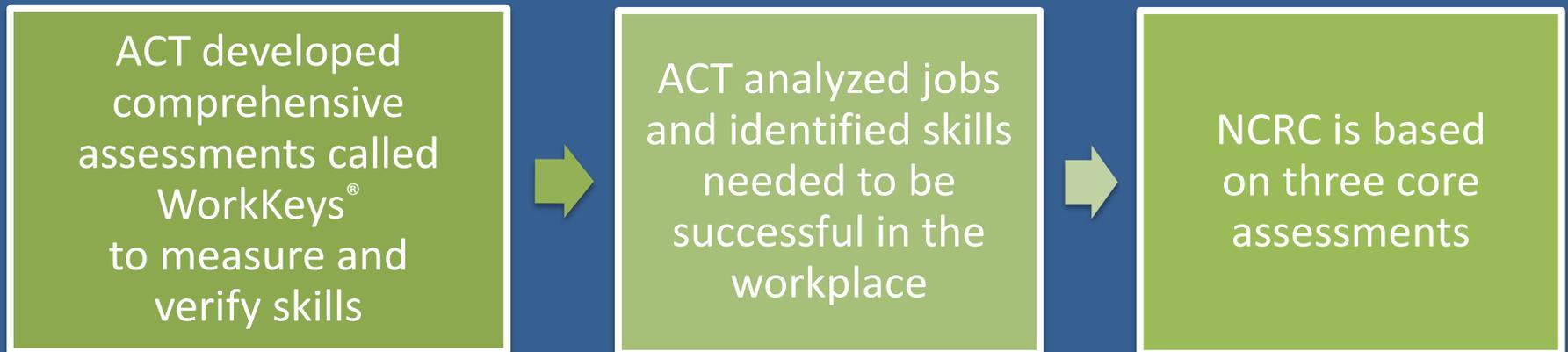


Oregon Business Plan.org



The Evolution of NCRC

Responding to employer needs



Comprehensive Skills Assessments



Foundational Skills

Communication	Reading for Information Business Writing Listening Writing
Problem Solving	Applied Mathematics Locating Information Applied Technology Observation
Interpersonal Skills	Teamwork
Personal Skills	Performance, Talent, Fit

NCRC documents these skills



Reading for Information

- » Measures skill used when reading written text



Applied Mathematics

- » Measures skill in applying mathematical reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving techniques



Locating Information

- » Measures skill in working with workplace graphics to find and analyze information

Certificate Levels



Level 3
score on all
assessments

35%
of jobs

- Auto Body Repair Technician
- Veterinary Assistant
- Janitorial Supervisor
- Drywall Installer
- Pharmacy Aid



Level 4
score on all
assessments

65%
of jobs

- Administrative Manager
- Head Cook
- Medical Assistant
- Engineering Technician
- Machinist



Level 5
score on all
assessments

90%
of jobs

- School Counselor
- Pharmacy Technician
- Semi-Conductor Processor
- Business Executive
- Electrician



Level 6
score on all
assessments

99%
of jobs

- Accountant
- Technical Writer
- Sales Manager
- Registered Nurse Manager
- Elevator Installer and Repairer

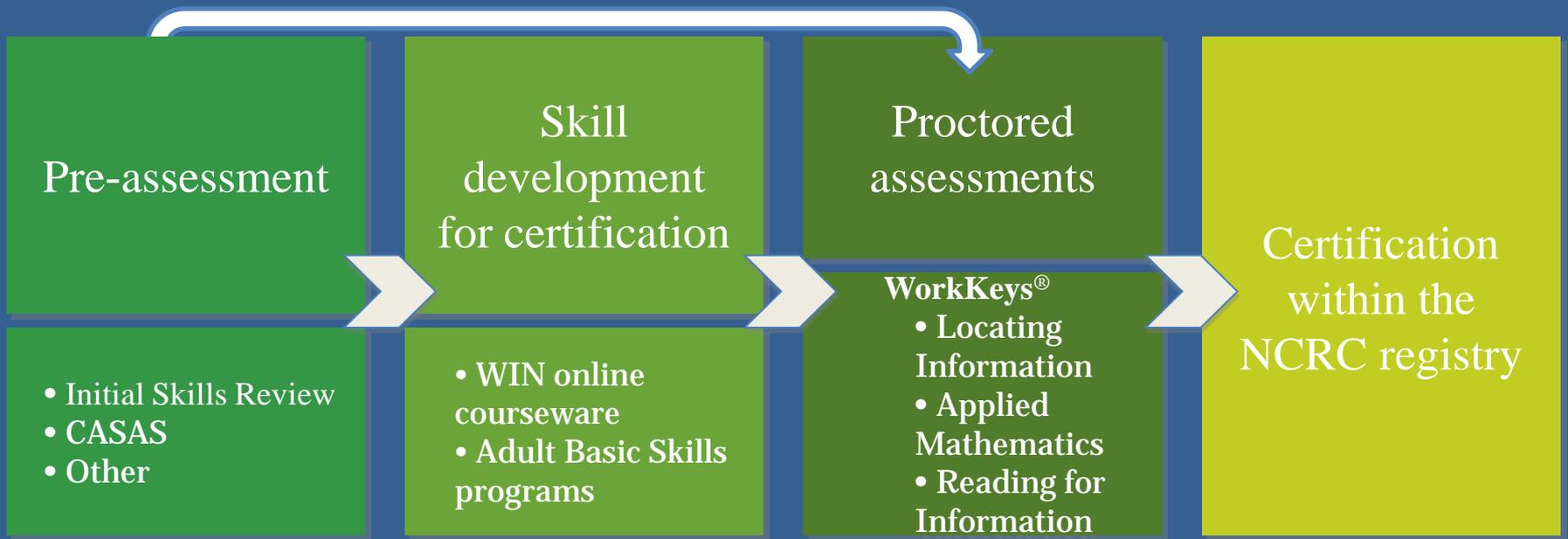
Certificates are awarded by achieving a minimum

Skill levels demonstrate ability for*

Sample Occupation Correlation

*Approximate percentage based on jobs in the WorkKeys occupational profile database.

Job applicants: Certification Steps





NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE®

GOLD

Is awarded in **Oregon** to

Joseph P. Sample

In recognition of verified skills in Applied Mathematics,
Locating Information, and Reading for Information

Dr. Camille Preus, Commissioner of Community Colleges and Workforce Development



Certificate #J102E3SAMPLE
Issue Date 6/30/09





NATIONAL CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE™

The WorkKeys® system permits a direct comparison of the level of skills needed to perform a job with the level of skills an individual currently demonstrates. The WorkKeys-powered Career Readiness Certificate shows that an individual has achieved a level of performance across a range of skills which, in combination, establish the person's readiness to enter a percentage of the jobs available as documented by the thousands of jobs in the ACT occupational profile database. The individual named on the face of this certificate has demonstrated the following proficiencies.

Applied Mathematics

Solve straightforward, basic problems requiring math operations; describe situations that require interchange of fractions, decimals, and percents to make sense; and manipulate simple money and time units.

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Applied Mathematics

Solve straightforward, basic problems requiring math operations; describe situations that require interchange of fractions, decimals, and percents to make sense; and manipulate simple money and time units to provide services or information.

Put information in the right order to solve problems requiring one- or two-step math operations; and use averages, ratios, proportions, rates, and fractions to describe situations and report information.

Perform several steps of logic and calculations; decide how to solve a problem; look up and use the correct formula; identify a best deal; calculate percent discounts and markups; and solve two-dimensional geometric problems to describe and analyze work situations.



Employer Usage of the NCRC

Ask for the certificate. It's that simple.

Add the certificate to all job postings.

“We prefer applicants with a National Career Readiness Certificate.”

The certificate, along with other criteria, will be considered as part of the selection process to identify candidates with verified foundational skills.

Other criteria include:

- Prior work experience
- Education
- Academic degrees, industry certifications and occupational licenses
- Reference checks
- Background checks
- Interviews

ACT does not recommend requiring the NCRC, though some employers may invest in job profiling to address specific needs.

Employers in Oregon



Employer Benefits



Quickly identify **qualified applicants**.

Applicants with an NCRC have a **documented level of foundational skills**, and are ready to be trained in the specific requirements of a job.

The NCRC **reduces hiring and training costs** and employee turnover.

The NCRC can be **incorporated into existing hiring practices**.

Job Applicant Benefits



The NCRC gives job applicants a tangible way to **document their skills.**



Earning an NCRC **builds confidence.**



The NCRC helps job applicants **stand out** to employers who participate in the NCRC, both in Oregon and across the country.

Oregon NCRC Implementation Committee

Guides the design and implementation of Oregon's NCRC program

Oregon Business Association

Ryan Deckert, President

Lane Workforce Partnership

Chuck Forster, Executive Director

Oregon Business Council

Duncan Wyse, President

Oregon Workforce Investment Board

Greg White, Executive Staff

NW Natural

Dave Williams, Vice President for Utility Services

Office of the Governor

Open position

PCC Structural

Eileen Drake, VP of Administration & Legal Affairs

Dept. of Community Colleges &

Workforce Development

Camille Preus, Commissioner

Mt. Hood Community College

John Sygielski, President

Oregon Employment Department

Laurie Warner, Director

Partnership with E3: Employers for Education Excellence

Goals for Oregon's NCRC

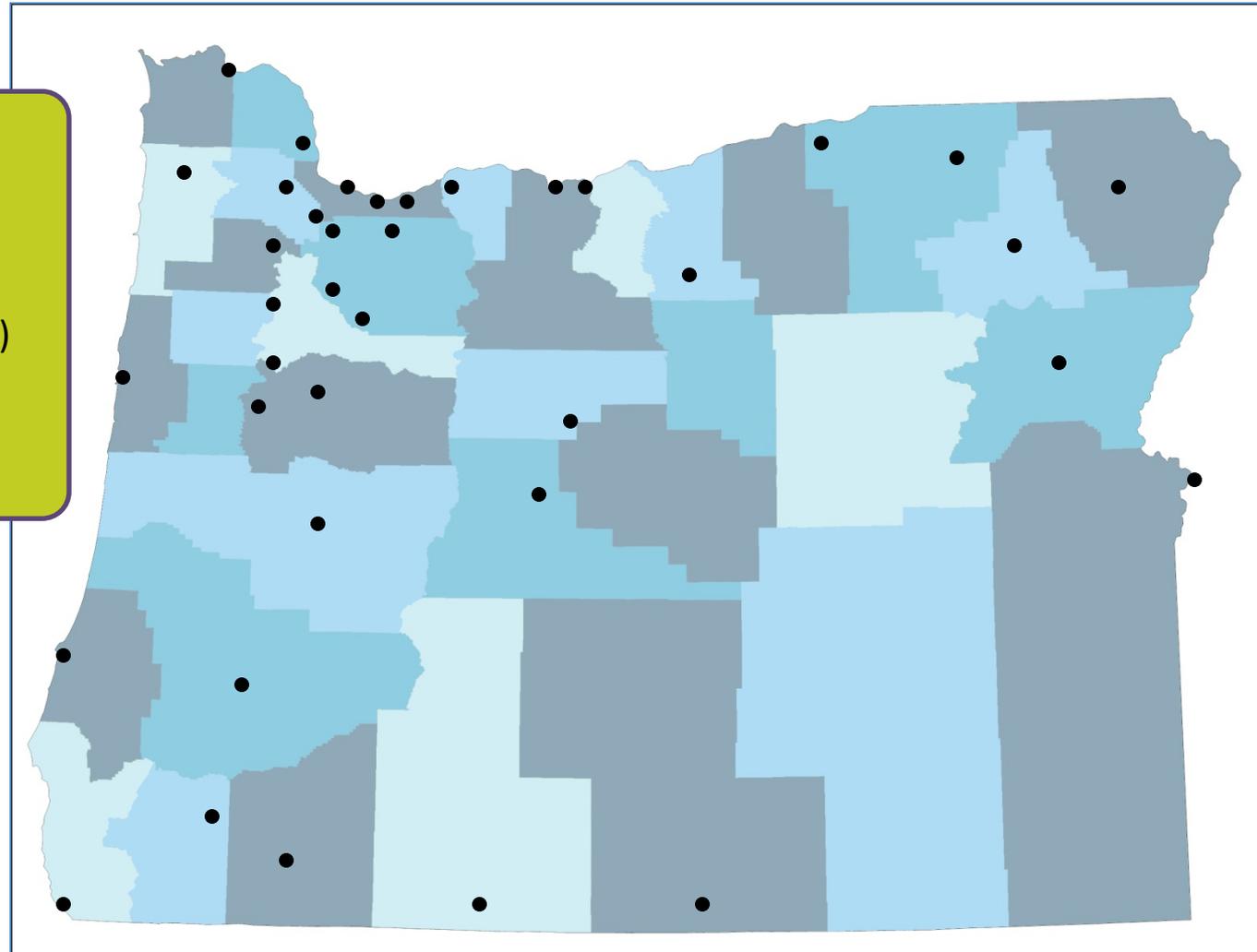
- Create strong demand
- Grow the number of certificate earners
- Build a sustainable delivery system
- Measure progress
- Maintain sustainable funding

Current NCRC Sites by County

Certificate Total

5,478

Bronze	706 (12.9%)
Silver	2,580 (47.1%)
Gold	2,101 (38.3%)
Platinum	91 (1.7%)



Immediate Opportunities

- ✓ Learn how the NCRC can address your workforce needs
- ✓ Sign up to indicate your preference for the NCRC!
- ✓ Use the NCRC in your organization
- ✓ Share your success with peers
- ✓ Recommend that business associations endorse the NCRC



*Get started
today:*

CONTACT:

OR VISIT:

WWW.OREGONNCRC.ORG

The Oregon NCRC program is funded with federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, administered by the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development. The Oregon NCRC is an equal opportunity program. Auxiliary formats are available upon request to persons with disabilities.