

Assessment of Skills - Teacher Coordinator Assessment

In module 6.2, you reviewed evaluation forms that were based on the employer review of the student centered around goals they had set out for their employees. Different employers have different standards from one company to the next. Practicing teacher-coordinators attest to the fact that employers have different sets of standards from which they judge their employees and, even more so, student workers. An example of these diverse standards can be seen in the following example.

One teacher coordinator communicated that during normal training station visits, one employer partner indicated that his student was one of the worst with whom he had ever worked. While on another training station visit, the training sponsor indicated that her trainee was the best student that the company had ever employed. When the coordinator received the evaluation forms on the two students, it was discovered that the student who was judged to be doing poorly received outstanding marks while the outstanding student received average marks. This incident points out the need for periodic visits to training stations and the need for a thorough understanding of the evaluation system by each employer partner. The incident also points out another reason why teacher-coordinators are responsible for awarding grades.

Teacher coordinators that follow through with training station visits often develop a rubric they follow by asking students various questions around the skills they have learned. They also ask the employer questions on how the student is performing. Based on the many questions teacher coordinators ask, combined with the evaluation form of the employer, and other components, the teacher coordinator is better able to give a proper assessment of the student's successes and opportunities for additional development. Remembering that WBL is a continuous process model, a rubric similar to the one below can be used to develop a grade for the student. Teacher coordinators are encouraged to modify the rubric to fit their specific needs, but to remember that this rubric assesses the students on the Essential Skills. Hence, these are universal standards at any workplace setting. They can, and should, add rows below to focus on specific Technical Skills they want to assess. It is also recommended that only 1-2 Essential skills be assessed on a single visit. This is because assessment of these skills is difficult and can lead to longer conversations with the students on how they can improve the skills. These conversations can happen at the training station or in a quieter setting where personal issues can be addressed.

Essential Employability Skills	1 Unsatisfactory	2 Poor	3 Average	4 Good	5 Excellent
Teamwork and Conflict Resolution	Does not work well in a team setting at all	Struggles working with teams, partners, or other tasks that include people	Attempts to do their best to work with others, but sometimes doesn't do their part	Works well with others with minor issues depending on the work	Works well with teammates and offers ways to address conflict resolution with other team members
Communication	Does not communicate well with others	Struggles with both written and verbal communication	May struggle with either written or verbal communication, but has clear goals to improve	May make minor mistakes in communication	Uses written and verbal communication skills effectively and efficiently
Problem Solving	Doesn't finish problem on a regular basis	Rarely attempts problems	Attempts to solve the problem, but doesn't ask for help	Accomplishes most problems	Is independent enough to accomplish problems by them self
Decision Making	May risk their own safety at times and needs to address decision making processes	Makes questionable decisions at times depending on the circumstance	Makes decisions that could be considered questionable or that doesn't follow company protocols	Makes decisions sometimes based on wrong information	Makes decisions based on the best available information and data
Critical Thinking	Doesn't speak up at all to challenge conventional thoughts	Doesn't use data or the information to make proper decisions or ask questions	Uses logic at times that is flawed or not based on sound data	Uses logic and science, but often does not question processes	Uses scientific and socratic logic to make decisions combined with data. (Questions conventional thought to innovate)
Adaptability and Flexibility	Does not adapt to any change	Feels uncomfortable adapting to situations	Adapts minimally and does their best to accommodate change	Adapts to changes when needed and is able to perform at an acceptable level	Is able to take on other work or change roles when asked to
Initiative and Self Drive	Takes no initiative at all and may blame others for lack of work success	Is consistently told they need to take initiative on projects	Has cell phone out, is often distracted at times	Most of the time stays motivated but may need to be told to stay on task	Is self motivated and able to accomplish tasks on a timely and regular basis
Reliability and Accountability	Absent Often/Rarely on time	Rarely on time/absent at important times	Punctuality and absenteeism in line with average workers	May be late or absent at times, but communicates beforehand	Never absent or late
Cultural Competence	Either doesn't try to get to know various types of people or doesn't work to improve understanding of various social, ethnic, racial or performance groups	Tries to learn about cultural issues impacting work, but does not always act on this in the most appropriate fashion	Is learning about the various types of people and is making gains	Understands barriers of people and willing to do their best to learn more about various types of people	Students cultural competence far exceeds students in similar settings and places them as a leader
Planning and Organizing	No planning or follow through in addressing daily or weekly tasks or goals	Planning was an "after fact" when things didn't go well or unsuccessful	Planning and organization allowed for general success at work	Planning and organization accomplished work on time and to a positive work environment and success	Planning and organization led to exemplary successes that made the student stand out as a leader
Technical Competency #1					
Technical Competency #2					

Alternative Text

These training visits, combined with real-time feedback from employer partners, often become the formative assessments that students need in a work setting. Ultimately, training station visits should lead to a more intensive summative assessment towards the end of the semester or school year. The summative assessment is often a comprehensive review of student performance and skill development combined with opportunities for students to demonstrate skill mastery (where appropriate); the teacher coordinator, the student, and the employer partner should all take part in the comprehensive review used for summative assessment purposes. It is important to note that formative assessments in the form of training station visits and

employer feedback can be incorporated as part of the summative assessment if paired with a summative portfolio project. Students can use the formative assessment (in this case, the rubric) to display growth in the work they have accomplished in a portfolio that is either physical in nature, or an e-portfolio (internet based) combined with a comprehensive review of student growth and performance. More information on portfolios will be provided in module 6.6.

Another great formative assessment for students to complete are reflection questions based on the training station visits. Developing a set of reflective questions for each visit would benefit the student by having them focus on the interaction and develop a plan to improve. These, too, can be included in final, summative portfolios to display growth in their work experience.

Assessment - Employer Assessment

As noted in module 6.3, employer assessment can look different on any day of the week and in different training stations. While employer assessments are a great way to produce feedback on improving student work performance, they are not always the best way to determine a student's classroom grade. Why is that?

Employers are often assessing students on various levels. For example, an employer might assess a student on the amount of work that gets done, not on the level of improvement they have made as a new employee. They might also assess a student based on comparisons of other students in the program, or possibly other workers they have on-site. Grading should not be based on other factors other than the student's growth, which means these types of assessments should be seen as lesser grades (formative assessments), that are meant to assess improvement and not have a great impact on student grades. One way to assess students based on improvement, versus skill, is to have the employer create goals for the student. Working with the WBL coordinator and student on such goals would allow the student to know what success looks like with the established goals. Using the [Training Plan Documentation - Goals Sheet](#) below as a start for the employer will likely allow a more thorough conversation on what the goals the employer had in mind, and how students can reach those goals.

Remember, employer partners have not received training on assessment techniques as educators have; this can lead to inconsistency in employer assessments. Teacher-coordinators should view employer assessments of student performance as one factor that contributes to the student's grade. Keep in mind that our focus should be on student skill development and mastery of the Essential Skills and Technical Competencies. As previously outlined, it is your responsibility to help employers understand how to more effectively assess and provide feedback focused on skill development.

Employer assessments are exceptional for reflection purposes, so discouraging these types of assessments or playing them "down" as insignificant should not happen. Employer feedback is essential to the student's growth, and the successfulness of the program overall. Use employer assessments to garner further help and information for students to improve their performance.