

## ERS Support for Education-to-Work Transitions

As post-secondary institutions face increasing pressure to demonstrate that their graduates are achieving successful employment outcomes, many are seeking creative ways to help students to be proactive about career planning, to document what they have to offer, and to build relevant work experience into their studies.

Since experiential, workplace-based learning can create an invaluable bridge to future career success, many educators are investing renewed energy in strengthening educator-employer partnerships. Positive partnerships depend on mutual benefit: Students gain opportunities to apply their learning and to gain valued work experience and references. Employers gain new skill capacity and may have a chance to try out potential new employees.

Both workplace-based learning and regular employment are most successful when students or graduates start out being as “employment ready” as possible, particularly with respect to the “soft skills” required for optimal performance – notably, effective self-management and interpersonal skills, including teamwork and working well with supervisors. No one wants students or graduates to flounder because soft skills are missing. Most employers see it as “not their job” to help build these, while educators and students are often unsure how to measure or strengthen them.

The Employment Readiness Scale™ (ERS) is ideally suited to help achieve the above objectives. The only known standardized measure of employment readiness, it is a quick, comprehensive assessment designed to:

- Provide a baseline measure of an individual’s strengths and needs
- Help formulate customized action plans for building employment readiness
- Measure changes in employment readiness at different benchmark points
- Ensure that students are employment ready when entering the workplace

In addition to its use in enhancing services to individuals and groups, ERS roll-up reports can support the post-secondary institution in:

- *Program planning* – Understanding patterns of need for different student groups, identifying areas they could most benefit from learning, coaching, and/or mentoring
- *Program evaluation* - Demonstrating the impact of programs, services and work experience on learners’ employment readiness (e.g., by measuring pre-post career education classroom components, career advising and coaching, workshops, peer assistance, mentoring, or work placements)
- *Identifying best practices* – What learning strategies are most effective
- *Accountability reporting* – Showing return on investment, the impact of activities to prepare students for successful education-to-work transitions
- *Marketing* – Demonstrating the benefits to employers of hiring “employment ready” students
- *Advocacy* – Making the case for future investments in career support strategies based on proven value / outcomes for students

### For more information:

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