Jobs to Careers | *Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care*

Employer Self-Assessment:
Organizational Readiness for Implementing a Work-Based Learning or Career Pathways Program

Jobs to Careers
National Program Office

c/o Jobs for the Future
88 Broad Street, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

TEL 617.728.4446
FAX 617.728.4857

www.jobs2careers.org

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

THE HITACHI FOUNDATION

JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

UNC IOA *Institute on Aging*

UNC | THE CECIL G. SHEPS CENTER FOR HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

This tool will help *employers* assess their readiness for implementing innovations in the area of work-based learning and career pathway initiatives for frontline health care workers. Employers can assess their strengths and limitations related to policies, practices, and processes that are likely to contribute to the successful implementation and adoption of such initiatives. After completing the tool, employers may want to address areas identified through the self-assessment to boost their prospects for successfully implementing work-based learning for frontline workers in health care. The *Employer Self-Assessment Tool* is based on experiences gained by the 17 projects supported by *Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-based Learning for Quality Care*. A five-year, $15.8 million national initiative, *Jobs to Careers* is dedicated to improving the quality of care for patients and communities by changing the way frontline workers are trained, rewarded, and advanced in careers. This tool was developed by Jennifer Craft Morgan and Bob Konrad of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who led the evaluation team for *Jobs to Careers*.

Who Are Frontline Workers in Health Care?

Frontline health care workers generally have education levels at the Bachelor's level or below, with median annual wages below $40,000, and they provide direct care or service. As you answer the questions in the organizational readiness tool, consider this partial list of jobs these women and men perform.

Cardiovascular technologists and technicians
Child, family, and school social workers
Dental assistants
Dietetic technicians
Emergency medical technicians and pharmacists
Environmental science (e.g., housekeeping)
Health educators
Home health aides
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians
Medical and public health social workers
Medical assistants
Medical records and health information technicians
Medical transcriptionists
Mental health and substance abuse social workers
Mental health counselors
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants

Occupational health and safety specialists
Occupational therapist assistants
Personal and home care aides
Pharmacy aides
Pharmacy technicians
Physical therapist aides
Physical therapist assistants
Psychiatric aides
Psychiatric technicians
Recreational therapists
Radiologic technologists and technicians
Rehabilitation counselors
Respiratory therapist technicians
Social and human services assistants
Substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors
Surgical technologists

Jobs to Careers
Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care

---

1. Please list the frontline worker occupations or job titles that you anticipate targeting for work-based learning and/or career pathways initiatives. Respond "TBD" if targets have not been identified.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

As you answer the following questions, think about the frontline workers you named in question 1.

---

2. To what extent are the following a priority for your organization?	Not a Priority	Minor Priority	Major Priority
Develop a culture that supports learning	1	2	3
Develop partnerships with area educational organizations	1	2	3
Cultivate organizational commitment among workers	1	2	3
Become an employer of choice	1	2	3
Provide frontline workers with opportunities to advance their careers	1	2	3
Provide frontline workers with opportunities to increase their wages	1	2	3
Support workers in maintaining work/life balance	1	2	3
Improve quality of care through a more educated workforce	1	2	3
"Grow our own" frontline workers to fill mid-level professional positions	1	2	3
Improve team functioning at all levels of the organization	1	2	3
Extend the ability of health care providers to fully implement evidence-based practice that requires different/higher-level skills of the frontline workers	1	2	3
Develop skills or certifications of current workers to fulfill skill needs in the workplace	1	2	3
Promote economic development within the community	1	2	3

Jobs to Careers | *Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care*

3. Has your organization participated in any other workforce development initiatives that target frontline health and healthcare workers?	Yes	No

4. Have you partnered or collaborated with any of the following types of organizations on workforce development projects?		
Educational institutions	Yes	No
Nonprofit organizations in your community	Yes	No
Government agencies	Yes	No
Workforce Investment Boards	Yes	No
Other employers	Yes	No
Other. Please specify.	Yes	No

5. Please rate the level of commitment to frontline workforce development for each group.	Low	Medium	High
Upper management	1	2	3
Middle management	1	2	3
Human resources department	1	2	3
Nursing or clinical education department	1	2	3

Jobs to Careers | *Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care*

Infrastructure for Education and Training

	Yes	No
6. Do you have replacement staff for workers who are away from their job duties for educational or staff meeting purposes? Definition of replacement staff: Either a pool of workers or additional funds to hire temporary or agency workers to cover scheduling gaps that result from educational release time	Yes	No

	Yes	No
7. Do students complete clinical rotations or intern in your organization?	Yes	No

	Yes	No
8. Do you have a staff person designated to work on training and development at least half time?	Yes	No

	Yes	No
9. Do you dedicate resources (e.g., staff, money) to local educational institutions (e.g., community colleges) to increase their capacity to train health care workers?	Yes	No

	Yes	No
10. Do you have any other internal resources dedicated specifically to the training or development of frontline workers? If YES, please specify.	Yes	No

Jobs to Careers | *Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care*

11. Are any of the following available to frontline workers at your organization?

	Yes	Some Access	No
Classrooms on site	Yes	Some Access	No
Computer lab on site	Yes	Some Access	No
Other computer access	Yes	Some Access	No
Library with health-related reference materials	Yes	Some Access	No
Study area on site	Yes	Some Access	No
Clinical training space	Yes	Some Access	No
Clinical practice materials or equipment	Yes	Some Access	No
Internet access	Yes	Some Access	No
On-site developmental education (e.g., ESOL, literacy)	Yes	Some Access	No

Human Resource Policies and Practices

Question 12 lists human resources practices and policies related to the skills or career development of frontline workers. This question addresses which policies or practices of your organization apply to the typical, full-time frontline worker.

Please circle "Yes" if a policy or practice is available to all frontline workers, "Case by Case" if it applies only to some individuals or some positions, and "No" if you do not offer it at all.

12. Does your organization offer the following to the typical, full-time frontline worker?

Career development and performance evaluation

Job descriptions containing documentation of competencies needed	Yes	Case by Case	No
Job descriptions containing documentation of credentials required for specific job titles	Yes	Case by Case	No
Performance assessments that are required for frontline worker positions within your organization	Yes	Case by Case	No
Competency assessments that are integrated into the performance assessment process for frontline workers	Yes	Case by Case	No
Pay raises upon documentation of having learned a competency or set of competencies	Yes	Case by Case	No
Promotion upon documentation of having learned a competency or set of competencies	Yes	Case by Case	No
Promotion from within (e.g., specific policies regarding how long a job will be posted within the organization before it is posted outside the organization)	Yes	Case by Case	No

On-site training and skill development

Skills assessment for new frontline workers to determine their training and basic skills (e.g., literacy, math, etc.) remediation needs	Yes	Case by Case	No
On-site training that leads to additional industry-recognized or college-credit-based credentials for participants	Yes	Case by Case	No

Access to pre-college (or remedial) skills development materials	Yes	Case by Case	No
Access to pre-college (or remedial) tutors for GED acquisition or college readiness	Yes	Case by Case	No
Formal, in-house continuing education training	Yes	Case by Case	No

Scheduling and release time

Paid time off (educational release time) for workers to study, attend classes, or participate in approved educational activities	Yes	Case by Case	No
Flexible scheduling to accommodate educational activities or educational release time	Yes	Case by Case	No
Flexible work arrangements (e.g., self-scheduling)	Yes	Case by Case	No

Tuition policies

Tuition reimbursement Definition: With tuition reimbursement, an employee pays for his or her education up front, and the employer reimburses the employee, usually under conditions (e.g., achieving a certain grade at the end of the course).	Yes	Case by Case	No
Tuition advancement/remission Definition: With tuition advancement/remission, the employer pays the educational provider (or arranges payment) for a worker's education without the employee having to pay any money out of pocket.	Yes	Case by Case	No
Graduated educational expenses policy based on salary Definition: Graduated tuition policies pay more educational expenses (e.g., for books, materials, fees) for lower-income workers than for higher-income workers.	Yes	Case by Case	No
Policies for tuition or educational expenses that cover remedial skills development	Yes	Case by Case	No
Policies for tuition or educational expenses that cover continuing education	Yes	Case by Case	No

Jobs to Careers | *Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care*

Supportive services

Access to staff who act as case managers to help frontline workers access resources, such as child care, transportation, or health care	Yes	Case by Case	No
Career coaching Definition: General coaching focused on work, career transitions, or other career-related issues	Yes	Case by Case	No
Career mapping or career lattices Definition: A formal articulation of a career ladder or lattice (e.g., a sequence of jobs that can be formalized within or across departments) that includes instruction on or enumeration of the educational, credentialing, or other steps needed to reach educational and career objectives	Yes	Case by Case	No
Academic or educational advising Definition: Coaching-based development and execution of individualized frontline worker educational plans; includes help navigating degree, certificate, or credential requirements related to long-term educational plans	Yes	Case by Case	No

Jobs to Careers
Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care

Learning Opportunities at and Through Work

13. Are courses or other workplace learning opportunities (college, continuing education, or certificate training) offered on site?	Yes	Some-times	No

If YES:

Are these learning experiences offered in a way that is convenient for the schedules of frontline workers?	Yes	Some-times	No
Are active learning experiences promoted over traditional teaching methods (e.g., instructors facilitate knowledge sharing rather than lecture)?	Yes	Some-times	No
Are instructors enlisted from colleges to deliver learning at the work site?	Yes	Some-times	No
Are supervisors or other employees recognized as faculty by the educational institution?	Yes	Some-times	No

	Never	Rarely	Some-times	Often
14. Do frontline workers have opportunities to reflect on and learn from critical incidents or work projects (e.g., team meetings to discuss what's going on at work)?	1	2	3	4
15. Are situations encountered at work turned into teachable moments for frontline workers?	1	2	3	4
16. Do frontline workers have opportunities for on-the-job, peer-to-peer learning?	1	2	3	4
17. Does your organization conduct mentor-based training (e.g., formal process by which a mentor teaches job competencies)?	1	2	3	4
18. Do employees who are serving as mentors receive bonuses or salary increases associated with their mentoring responsibilities?	1	2	3	4

19. Do employees who are serving as mentors have time dedicated in their position to this role?	1	2	3	4
20. Does your organization reward supervisors for excellent supervisory performance?	1	2	3	4
21. Do supervisors receive training on how to mentor or coach frontline workers?	1	2	3	4
22. Is the input of frontline workers solicited in patient care planning?	1	2	3	4

Size and Structure of Organization

23. Please indicate which of the following best describes your organization.

a. Behavioral health center

b. Community health center

c. Health system or network

d. Hospital

e. Long-term care provider (including home health and hospice care)

f. Other. Please specify. _____

24. Is your organization part of a larger health care network or system? _____

25. Approximately how many employees work for your organization? _____

26. About how many vertical levels separate the highest and lowest positions at your organization, including both the highest and lowest levels? For example, an organization consisting of a CEO, clinical supervisors, and frontline health care workers would have three vertical levels._____

27. About how many frontline workers do you employ? _____

28. Do you feel that you have a frontline worker turnover problem? (Check one)

☐ Yes, we have a substantial problem with turnover.

☐ Yes, we have a mild problem with turnover.

☐ No, we do not have a turnover problem.

29. Approximately what percentage of your training and education budget is allocated for frontline worker education and training?

a. None

b. Less than 25%

c. 25% to 50%

d. More than 50%

Jobs to Careers

Transforming the Front Lines of Health Care

Jobs to Careers explores new ways to help frontline health care workers get the skills they need to provide quality care and build a sustainable career. It helps health care providers improve the quality of patient care and health services by building the skills and careers of their frontline employees.

Through *Jobs to Careers*, health care employers build strong partnerships with education institutions and other organizations to change the way frontline employees are trained, rewarded, and advanced. Career paths are developed and made readily available to frontline employees. Employer and education partners make systematic changes that better recognize the needs of working adults and that improve access to and success in skill-building programs.

A hallmark of *Jobs to Careers* is work-based learning: frontline employees master occupational and academic skills in the course of completing their jobs tasks and fulfilling their day-to-day responsibilities. While working full time, frontline employees enter college and earn academic credit for workplace training. Other learning approaches in *Jobs to Careers* include technology-enabled, experience-based, and traditional worksite and off-site learning.

To realize the unique *Jobs to Careers* approach to learning, employers and educators implement systems changes, such as:

• At the workplace: Developing new job positions and responsibilities; deeply involving supervisors in employee training and career development; and offering paid release time, pre-paid tuition assistance, job coaching, and mentoring.

• At the educational institution: Providing college credit for work-based learning, prior learning, and entry-level health care credentials; offering accelerated and part-time degree and certificate programs; contextualizing college preparatory math and English courses to health care concepts and job tasks; and appointing professional staff from health care employers to be adjunct college faculty.

Jobs to Careers moves everyone forward to a healthier future. Frontline employees receive rewards for building skills and expanding knowledge necessary for their current jobs and qualifying them to advance to new positions. Employers build and retain talented and committed employees, while bolstering a workplace culture that supports professional development, mentorship, and collaboration across the entire health care team. And health care consumers receive high-quality care and services, delivered by a high-quality workforce.

Jobs to Careers is a $15.8 million initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Hitachi Foundation, with additional support from the U.S. Department of Labor. Jobs for the Future manages the initiative. Seventeen partnerships representing hospitals, community health centers, long-term care, and behavioral health received multiyear Jobs to Career grants.

For more information on *Jobs to Careers*:

Maria Flynn
Director, *Jobs to Careers*

617.728.4446
mflynn@jff.org
www.jobs2careers.org