



WorkKeys® / National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) Employer Experience

Background

- Employer: Request Foods
- Number of employees: 410
- Location: 3460 John F Donnelly Drive, Holland, MI 49424
- Contact: Mark Zink, People Services Manager, 616-786-0900, marzin@requestfoods.com
- Detail about business:

Request Foods is a leading copacker of custom entrées, side dishes and specialty items, consistently ranked among the top frozen food companies in the United States.

The Need

Request Foods has a key position in manufacturing – production cook – where the lack of adequate skills could translate into costly errors. It was also an area where they were experiencing high turnover. WorkKeys/NCRC was seen as a tool that could help them understand the baseline knowledge that was needed to successfully perform the job. Armed with these standards, Request Foods hoped they could improve their hiring process, filling openings with qualified candidates and also addressing any skill gaps in their incumbent workforce.

The Action

Request Foods used the ACT WorkKeys Profiler to determine the job requirements for the production cook position. WorkKeys/NCRC was explained to the existing workforce, emphasizing that it would help them get better qualified co-workers. Eight of the 25 employees currently in the production cook position volunteered to take the WorkKeys test. Their results were reviewed and it was determined that a Bronze level certificate would become the hiring standard. Going forward, candidates responding to a job posting for production cook would be required to show evidence of skills at the Bronze NCRC level. If there was any question, the candidate would be asked to complete the WorkKeys test at MichiganWorks! or M-TEC. The test results would then be used along with the candidate's prior work experiences to make the hiring decision.

The Results

To date, WorkKeys/NCRC has been used primarily as a recruiting tool versus a workforce development program for existing staff. KeyTrain has not yet been used by the incumbent workforce. Request Foods is using NCRC levels to communicate position requirements clearly and to objectively critique applicants for job openings. The use of WorkKeys/NCRC in their hiring decisions has helped Request Foods to locate and



employ individuals who have the skills required to be competent in the production cook role, therefore improving the organization's performance. The program has meet expectations and Request Foods plans to continue its roll-out by profiling additional jobs and using the results to set standards for their recruiting process.