KeyTrain
Locating Information

Workbook Introduction

and

Introduction to WorkKeys®

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**Course Introduction**

This course will introduce you to the WorkKeys system of workplace skills evaluation. This course will teach you Locating Information skills.

This section will focus on the goals and organization of the course.

**Course Objectives**

This course will provide you with training for the Locating Information skills area of the WorkKeys system.

Locating Information is the skill of reading and understanding common workplace graphics. These may include charts, tables, maps and diagrams.

The overall objectives of this course are:

- Introduce WorkKeys and Locating Information.
- Improve your Locating Information skills by teaching you skills you need and giving you a chance to practice these skills.
- Provide you practice in answering questions similar to those on the WorkKeys Locating Information test.

**Locating Information Skills**

This program will provide one with training for the Locating Information skills area of the WorkKeys system.

Locating Information is the skill of finding, extracting, understanding and using information that is not in the form of normal text. Examples include pie charts, bar charts, line graphs, tables and diagrams.
These workplace graphics are becoming more important in the modern workplace. They provide a way of communicating large amounts of information in a very compact form. Graphics can tell concepts, trends and arrangements very quickly. An effective chart or graph can communicate business trends better than words. A table can be used to show data in an easily usable form. Drawings and diagrams can communicate information about the size, shape or location of objects clearly.

As more jobs require employees to quickly understand a variety of data, locating information skills will become more important. Good locating information skills will help an employee to perform work faster and more efficiently.

**Locating Information Skill Levels**

WorkKeys Locating Information has 4 levels. The higher levels correspond to more difficult skills. As the level increases, so does the difficulty of the documents and problems to be solved.

- Level 3 ⇒ Level 4 ⇒ Level 5 ⇒ Level 6
- Graphics ⇒ More Detailed
- Language ⇒ More Difficult and Unfamiliar

At the higher levels the diagrams include more details and information. You may be required to use two or more related graphics to answer the question. The information is also presented in more unfamiliar language that is more difficult to understand.
Level 3

In this level one simple graphic or chart will be used. It may be one of these:

- Pie Charts
- Flow Charts
- Bar Graphs
- Maps
- Tables
- Forms

These documents will contain simple language and little distracting information.

_In Level 3, You Will Learn How To:_

- Find one or two pieces of information in the document.
- Insert one or two pieces of information into the document.

Example: Finding a phone number in a phone book

In addition, in Level 3 you should be able to understand common methods of creating and displaying information in a graphic. For instance, you should be able to determine the subject of a graph by reading its heading or other labels. You should be able to understand how to read a number from a line graph, or use a key to understand a map. You should be able to tell when parts of a chart indicate actual amounts, such as in a pie chart.

To be able to read the chart and communicate the information you have found, you must be able to use common workplace terms. You should be able to compare using words such as *more, less, smallest* and *largest*. You should also understand the format of common information such as phone numbers and social security numbers.
Level 4

The documents seen in Level 4 questions are still fairly simple. However they may contain more details, and you may need to pay attention to smaller variations in the information. The types of documents will usually be familiar:

- Line Graphs
- Basic Forms
- Tables
- Maps
- Flow Charts
- Diagrams
- Instrument Gauges

**In Level 4, You Will Learn How To:**

- Find several pieces of information in a document.
- Summarize and/or compare trends in a document.
- Use more than one document to complete a simple task.

Example: Determining if a company’s stock price is going up or down over time.

To succeed in Level 4, you must be able to perform simple sorting and reading in order to locate the information that is actually needed. Titles, headings and other labels must be used to determine which portions of the document contain the pertinent information.

You may then need to summarize or compare the information to determine the correct answer. Simple words may need to be used to communicate this, such as *all, only, increase, decrease, smaller or greater.*
Level 5

The documents that you see in Level 5 questions will become more complicated. They will contain more details, and may be longer than at earlier levels. The format of the graphics may be unfamiliar and confusing.

The language and symbols can be technical. These technical terms may be unfamiliar. This will test your ability to infer meanings and relationships among unfamiliar data. There may also be more detailed numerical information, including fractions and decimals.

In Level 5, You Will Learn How To:

- Summarize trends and main points in a document often containing many details.

- Compare trends and main points. You will need to focus on pertinent information and ignore distracting details.

- Use multiple documents to complete a task. This may involve using information from one graphic to answer a question on another graphic.

Example: For instance, you may need to determine the shipping charge for a package using a purchase order, parts list and maps to look up weights and distance to be shipped.

To succeed in Level 5, you must be able to carefully consider the question asked to determine the information that is being sought. You must examine the documents at hand and separate important information from distracting details. The information may then need to be summarized or compared to information in another graphic to determine the answer.

In these exercises you might be required to make decisions to arrive at the desired answer using directions such as estimate, recommend, or suggest.
Level 6

In level 6, the documents will be longer, often complex workplace graphics. These may include maps, blueprints and diagrams containing a considerable amount of detail and unusual language or symbols. In many cases, several documents will need to be worked with at once.

In Level 6, You Will Learn How To:

- Draw conclusions using information presented in one or more graphics.
- Apply information to specific situations. Details contained in the question may be needed in order to determine how or where the information should be found. There often may be similar or confusing data that must be sorted using decisions that one forms.
- Use several documents to complete the task. Some of the documents may contain unnecessary or potentially confusing details.

Example: Determine the properties of a chemical using a product sheet and a chart of thermal properties.

To achieve a level 6 rating, a person must be able to use higher order thinking skills. These will include sorting and analyzing data, determining the relative importance of information and drawing conclusions based on the information available or implied.

The person will be required to sort more details which are more easily confused than at lower levels. This can involve using judgment to infer which criteria is of highest priority or which information is most likely desired.
The WorkKeys® System

This course helps you to study the skills outlined by the ACT WorkKeys® system. But what is the WorkKeys system? The WorkKeys system was developed by ACT, Inc. to help you get the skills you need to be successful in most workplaces.

The WorkKeys system provides a common language for employers and employees to describe and discuss the skills needed to perform common work tasks successfully. With this system, you will be able to demonstrate that you possess the skills and qualities required for certain job assignments. This section will explain briefly how this works.

The WorkKeys System:

- Was developed by ACT, Inc. in 1991 (the same company that created the ACT Assessment® exam).

- Examines your ability to perform common practical tasks.

- Teaches you to deal with common situations you will find in your current or future job.
The WorkKeys System

Perhaps you have heard of the WorkKeys tests. You may be using this course to study for these tests, or you may be using it just to improve your workplace skills. However, the WorkKeys assessments are not the only component. The system provides a common language to describe common work skills. The three main parts of this system are **profiling**, **assessment**, and **instructional support**.

**Profiling** - Matching skills to jobs.
Profiling is a step-by-step procedure for determining what basic skills and what skill levels are required to be successful in a specific job assignment. An experienced job profiler and current workers in the job examine the job assignment and produce a list of the most important skills and the level of each skill required by the job.

**Assessment** - The WorkKeys tests.
A series of tests measure the current skills of an individual person. This provides scores or "levels" in one or more skill areas.

**Instructional Support** – Improving your skills to match job requirements.
The WorkKeys system includes instructional support that identifies methods to help learners improve their workplace skills. This course was developed using these methods as identified by ACT’s *Targets for Instruction* series.
WorkKeys Skills Areas

The WorkKeys system includes the skills that are required for almost all jobs. These skills are essential to all professions at all levels of education. The WorkKeys system groups common work skills into eight groups.

Reading for Information
These skills include your ability to read documents and understand the information contained in them.

Applied Mathematics
Measures your skill at performing common math skills.

Writing
The ability to compose and write documents that communicate ideas.

Listening
The ability to hear spoken information and understand directions and details.

Teamwork
Skills required to work together with people in a group towards a common goal.

Observation
Being able to learn tasks and information by watching other people perform these tasks.

Applied Technology
Understanding and working with electrical, mechanical, thermodynamic and hydraulic systems.

Locating Information
The ability to understand and work with information in the form of graphs, charts and diagrams.

Note that WorkKeys does not include job-specific skills. WorkKeys includes the basic skills that are used by all employees to understand and learn the specific items you need for an individual job.
How The WorkKeys System Works

Many businesses use the WorkKeys System to match the skills required by their jobs with the skills of their employees. The WorkKeys system is flexible and allows you to choose when and how you apply it. However certain basic elements of the system are almost always used:

**Job Profiling**
Job profiling is a way to determine what skills and at what level are required for a specific job.
- A trained profiler gathers a group of people who perform a specific job.
- Together they examine the tasks required to perform the job.
- The tasks are prioritized and ranked according to the WorkKeys scales.

The result is a job profile, which describes the skills and skill levels that are required for the job.

**Employee Assessment**
- New or existing employees are tested in the skills essential for the job.
- Each person receives a report of their skill levels.

**Instructional Support**
- In areas where the person's skills do not match the requirements of the job, instructional support is provided to improve the skills to meet the job profile.
An Example of the WorkKeys System in Use

In this example, a particular job at the Osprey Manufacturing Company was profiled. The job was a Machine Operator. After the profiler met with a team of people from Osprey, it was determined that the basic skills most needed to learn and perform the job were:

Reading for Information at a Level 4
Applied Mathematics at a Level 5
Locating Information at a Level 4

An employee who wanted to be promoted into this job took the WorkKeys assessments in these three areas. Her scores were:

Reading for Information - Level 4
Applied Mathematics - Level 4
Locating Information - Level 5

She has exactly the skill level required in Reading for Information, and has more than the skills required in Locating Information. However she needs to improve in Applied Mathematics. She could then study the Applied Mathematics Level 4 section of the KeyTrain course, take the practice quiz, and then take that WorkKeys assessment again.
Benefits of the WorkKeys System

For individuals and employees:

- WorkKeys allows you to find areas you are strong in. It allows you to demonstrate the skills that you already have to your current or future employer.

- WorkKeys provides a path for you to improve your skills. These skills are valuable to almost any job you have or want to have.

- WorkKeys gives you a way to qualify for better jobs. Jobs that require more WorkKeys skills generally pay better.

For businesses:

- WorkKeys allows a company to identify the skills that are needed for their most important job positions.

- WorkKeys helps a company to place employees in positions where they can succeed. It helps to ensure that employees in the key positions have the skills needed to do the job correctly.

- WorkKeys increases productivity and reduces hidden costs associated with poor hiring decisions. This helps the company to succeed.

- WorkKeys assists the company in making hiring and promotion decisions fairly and evenly.
Test Tips

You may be asked to take an assessment test as part of the WorkKeys system. Here are some tips to help you on this test:

- Get plenty of rest the night before the test. Eat a good breakfast that morning. Get to the test promptly, to give you time to relax and get comfortable before the test begins.

- Bring a watch to the test. Lay it on the table in front of you so you can keep track of time.

- Expect the first part of the test to be easier, and do not read more into a question than is asked.

- As the questions continue, you will be given more and more information on which to base your answer.

- When solving problems with lots of information, you need to read each line and pull out the important facts that are needed to solve the problem.

If you are running out of time and/or you have no idea how to answer the question you should try to make an educated guess. There are no points deducted for wrong answers.

The Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and Applied Technology tests are multiple-choice tests. Each test is normally about 45 minutes long. Listening and Writing are given together, and involve listening to a tape and writing a description of what you heard. In the Observation and Teamwork tests you watch several video tape segments, and then answer multiple-choice questions about each segment.

Normally you would not be given all of the tests. Ask which tests you will be given before the test date, and study using the KeyTrain materials which you may have available.