



WORKFORCE ATLAS

An Implementation Guide

Welcome

Welcome to the Workforce Atlas: An Implementation Guide

Workforce Atlas is an online career pathways platform aimed at helping individuals achieve personal, academic, and professional goals.

The motivation behind Workforce Atlas came from the passion of a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Dan Wagner. Dr. Wagner created a web platform for out-of-school youth to assess their literacy and numeracy skills and to determine their eligibility for select professions and to provide potential pathways for further academic and professional development. ProLiteracy and Project Literacy joined forces to build on Dr. Wagner's work and created a new platform, Workforce Atlas!

This Implementation Guide accompanies the Workforce Atlas web platform. The purpose of this guide is to provide educators and program directors with the tools to get the most value out of Workforce Atlas. Please use this guide as a ready-made toolkit to assist in exploring how Workforce Atlas can add value to your organization's goals and literacy initiatives.

We thank our partner Pearson, founding partner of Project Literacy, and other contributors the University of Pennsylvania, Results for Development, Dollar General Literacy Foundation, and National Center for Families Learning for their generous support of this project.

"I was amazed, I didn't believe that I was qualified for all of the things that they said. They said that I could be a person that speaks out for other people, the nursing stuff I knew about, and the cooking stuff. It was like everything I've thought about doing it told me I could. So it was like looking into the future."

—WFA user

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*Funding provided by Pearson,
founding partner of*

**PROJECT
LITERACY**

Introduction

What is Workforce Atlas?

Workforce Atlas (Workforceatlas.org) is an online career pathways platform that assesses an individual's literacy proficiency, numeracy skills, workplace skills, and interests. Once individuals complete the assessments they are directed to recommended occupations, online resources, and local providers that can help them achieve their professional, academic, and personal goals. Workforce Atlas was specifically designed with all literacy levels in mind.

Why should my organization use Workforce Atlas?

Individuals in your organization can use Workforce Atlas to:

- Assess their reading and numeracy skills
- Learn what workforce skills and interests they may already have
- Explore careers that interest them
- Access resources that may help them in their journeys
- Find and connect with local programs to help them reach their goals

What kinds of programs and organizations can use Workforce Atlas?

Workforce Atlas can be used by many different types of programs and for many purposes. The platform can be used on an individual level in workforce training; or within local service providers with basic literacy or ESL programming.

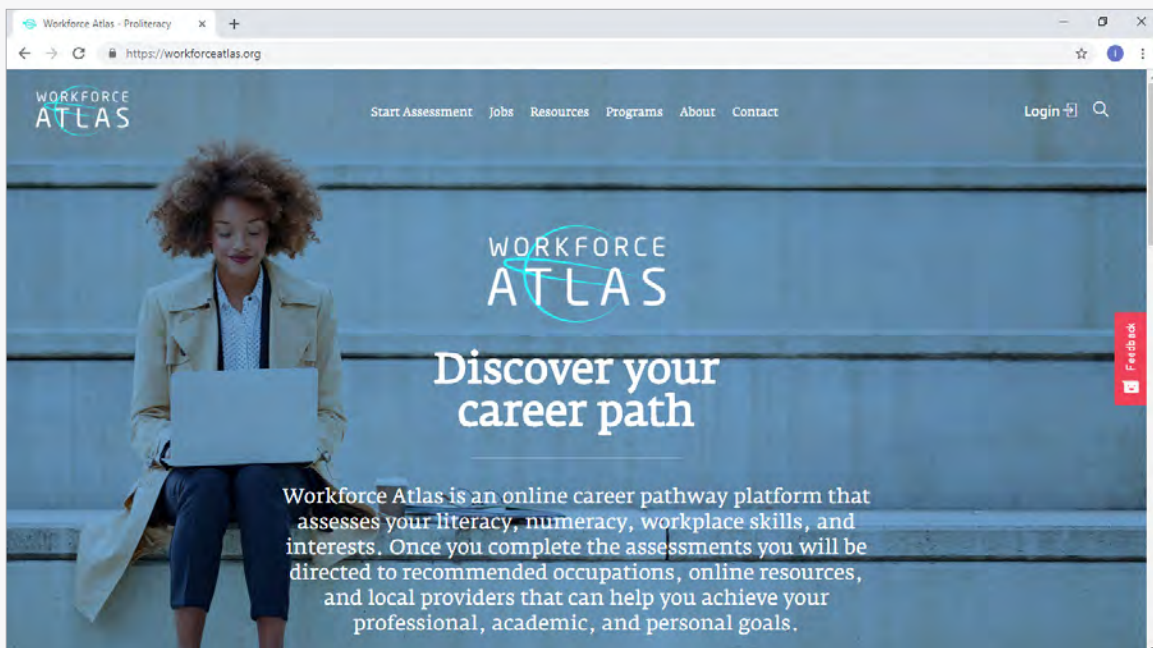
Workforce Atlas: Overview

Home Page

Workforce Atlas's home page (Workforceatlas.org) provides background about the platform and a brief explanation of what it offers. Across the top are navigation buttons to the six different pages on the platform:

- 1 **Start Assessment**
- 2 **Jobs**
- 3 **Resources**
- 4 **Programs**
- 5 **About**
- 6 **Contact**

In the upper right corner, visitors will find a magnifying glass for searching the platform and a Login button which will take individuals directly to the login page. Upon scrolling down to the bottom of the home page they will see two direct links Start Assessment and Resources, which bring them directly to those pages.



Workforce Atlas: Overview

Start Assessment

The Start Assessment tab is where most individuals will be directed to start. The page opens to a Sign Up screen asking them for basic demographic information. Then, individuals should click on the Sign Up & Start Assessment button at the bottom of the page. Individuals are required to create an account in order to participate in the assessments. If a user already has an account, they can use the Login button at the bottom of the page as well as in the upper right corner of every page on the platform. While an account is required to participate in assessments, it is not required if they simply wish to browse the Jobs and Resources pages of Workforce Atlas.

There are four different assessments on the Start Assessment page: Job Interests, Job Skills, Reading, and Math. These assessments will show up after an individual has created an account and logged in. The four assessments need to be completed in the order they appear before moving on to the next.

WORKFORCE ATLAS

Sign Up Assessment Jobs Resources Programs About Contact

Login

Sign Up

We want to help you keep track of the tests you have taken. To do so, you need to sign up for an account. You can still use the site without an account, but you won't be able to save your answers and finish tests at a later time. An account will help you track your progress.

First Name *

Last Name *

Age

Choose one

Gender

Choose one

E-Mail *

Zip *

City *

State

Choose one

Race/Ethnicity

Choose one

Current work status

Choose one

Highest level of schooling you have completed

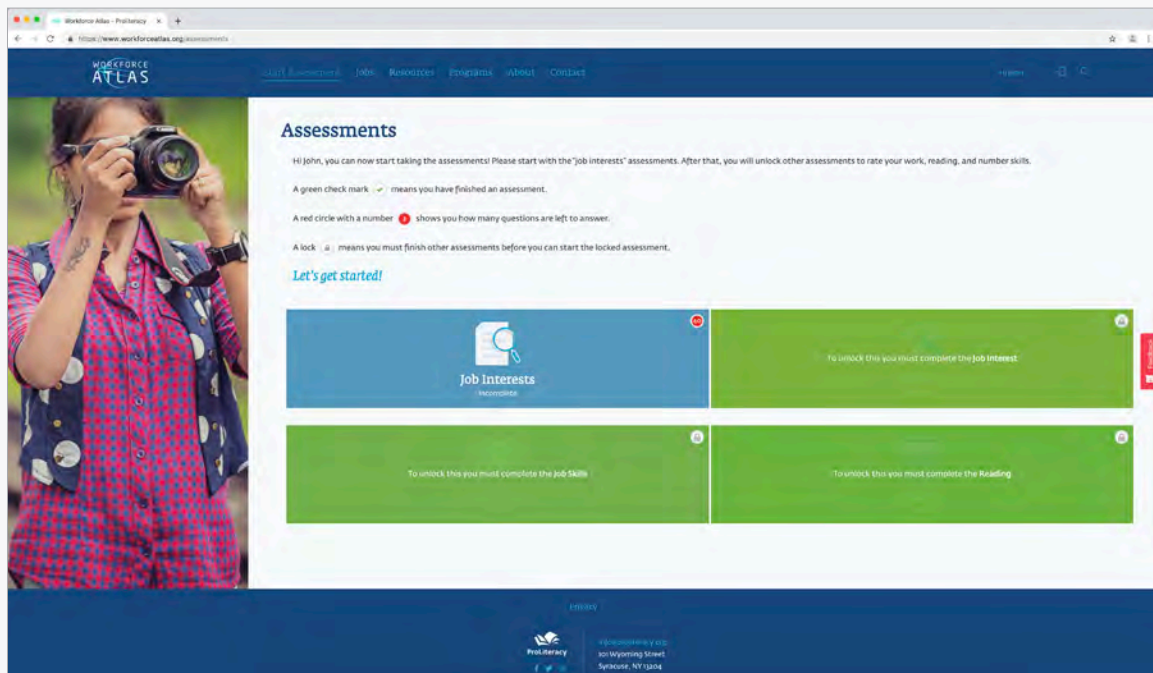
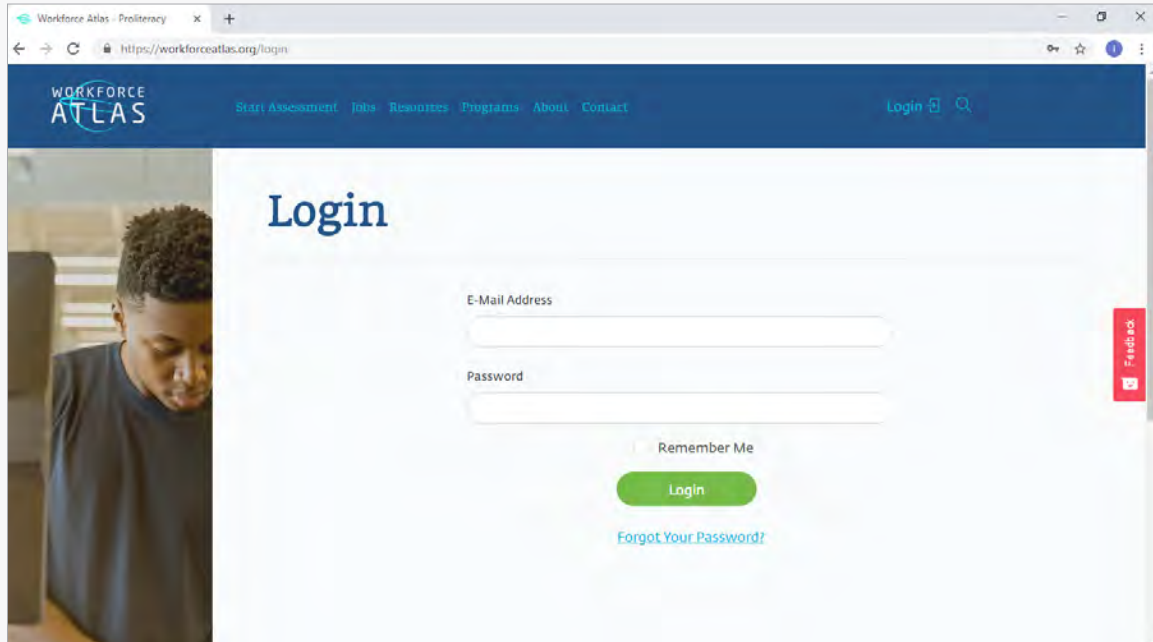
Choose one

Password *

Confirm Password *

Feedback

Workforce Atlas: Overview



Workforce Atlas: Overview



Workforce Atlas: Overview

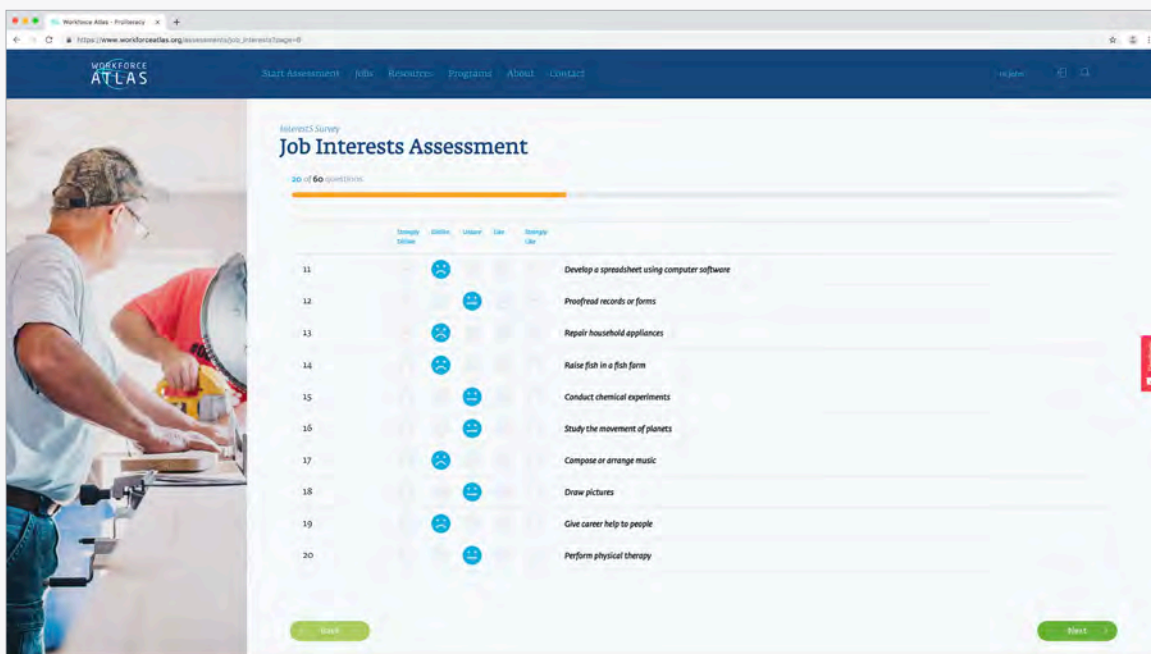
Assessment Components

The assessment is divided into four sections:

- 1 Job Interests
- 2 Job Skills
- 3 Reading
- 4 Math

1 Job Interests Assessment

The first assessment is Job Interests. There are 60 questions aimed at determining workforce interests of an individual. Individuals are given statements describing certain tasks and then asked to rank them using the face icons shown—the icons range from Strongly Dislike to Strongly Like.

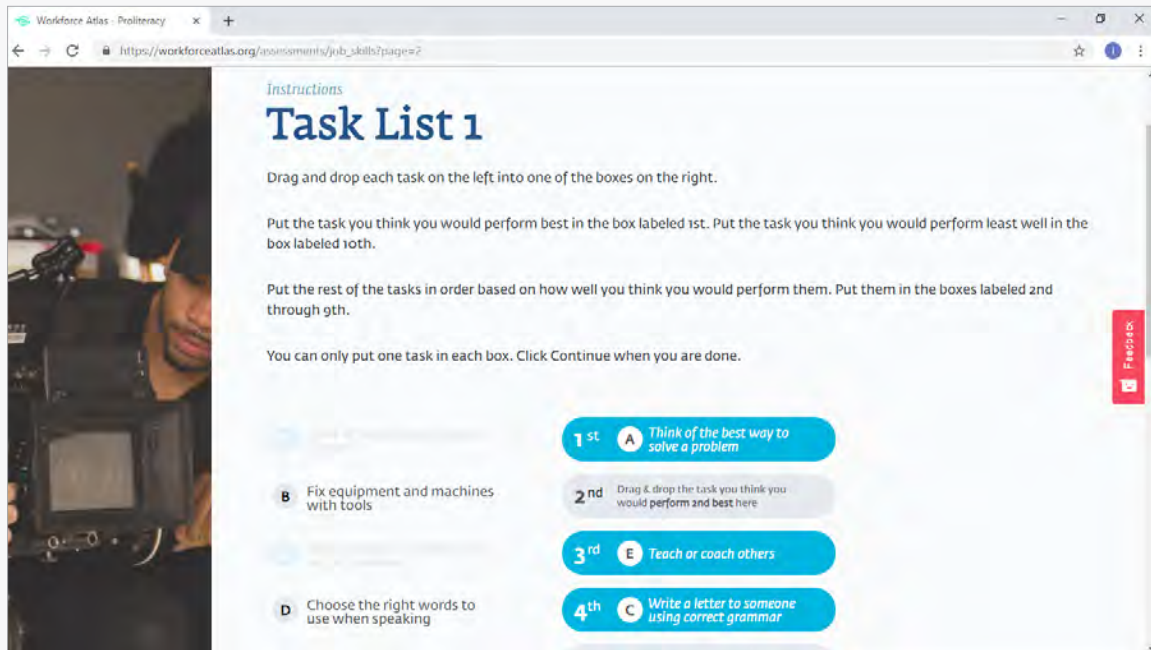


Workforce Atlas: Overview

2

Job Skills Assessment

The second assessment gauges an individual's job skills. The questions are aimed at determining skills of individuals that are directly related to specific jobs or industries. Questions in this section are ranked 1–10 using a drag-and-drop activity. Individuals are provided with a list of tasks and asked to rank various skills and tasks based on how they think they perform—from best at performing to worst. The individual completes this task twice to accurately assess skills.



Workforce Atlas: Overview

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Reading Assessment

The third assessment is for reading proficiency. The questions are aimed at assessing an individual's reading comprehension and vocabulary. All questions in this section are multiple choice.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Workforce Atlas Reading Assessment. The page title is "Reading Survey" and the main heading is "Reading Assessment". It indicates that the user is on question 6 of 20. The current question is titled "7 New Job, New Problems" and contains a short story about Kim and Joon. The question asks why Kim says, "Can we go to a place that does not serve pizza?". The multiple-choice options are: "She is allergic to pizza.", "She does not like pizza." (which is selected), "She had pizza for lunch.", and "She works at a pizza restaurant." The interface includes a "Back" button and a "Next" button at the bottom.

Workforce Atlas - ProLiteracy

Start Assessment Jobs Resources Programs About Contact

Hi John

Reading Survey

Reading Assessment

6 of 20 questions

7 New Job, New Problems

Kim comes home from her job at Pizza Time. She sits down to rest her feet. Joon walks in the door. He takes off his coat. He says, "I'm glad I don't have to wear a suit to work!" Kim jumps up from her chair. "To work?" she asks. "Did you get a job?" Joon looks at her and smiles proudly. "I will be a machine operator at Seacoast Industries. I start next Monday." Joon hugs Kim. Then he says, "I'll tell you about it during dinner. I'm taking you and Han out to eat!" Kim says, "That's a great idea. Can we go to a place that does not serve pizza?" Kim and Joon laugh. The Lee family ate at a Tex-Mex restaurant. They talked about the things they could do now that Joon had a job. Then Joon smiled. "I have an idea. Childcare is expensive. So, you could ask your boss to schedule you fewer hours. Then you can be there when Han comes home from school." "When will we see you?" Kim asked. Joon replied, "Kim, we're building our future. Now, you should be there for Han. You can cut your hours. And then you can take better care of yourself and our new baby. We will have family time on the weekends." Kim said, "You're right, Joon. We need to make the most of our time together. And we can look forward to a great future."

Why does Kim say, "Can we go to a place that does not serve pizza?"

- She is allergic to pizza.
- She does not like pizza.
- She had pizza for lunch.
- She works at a pizza restaurant.

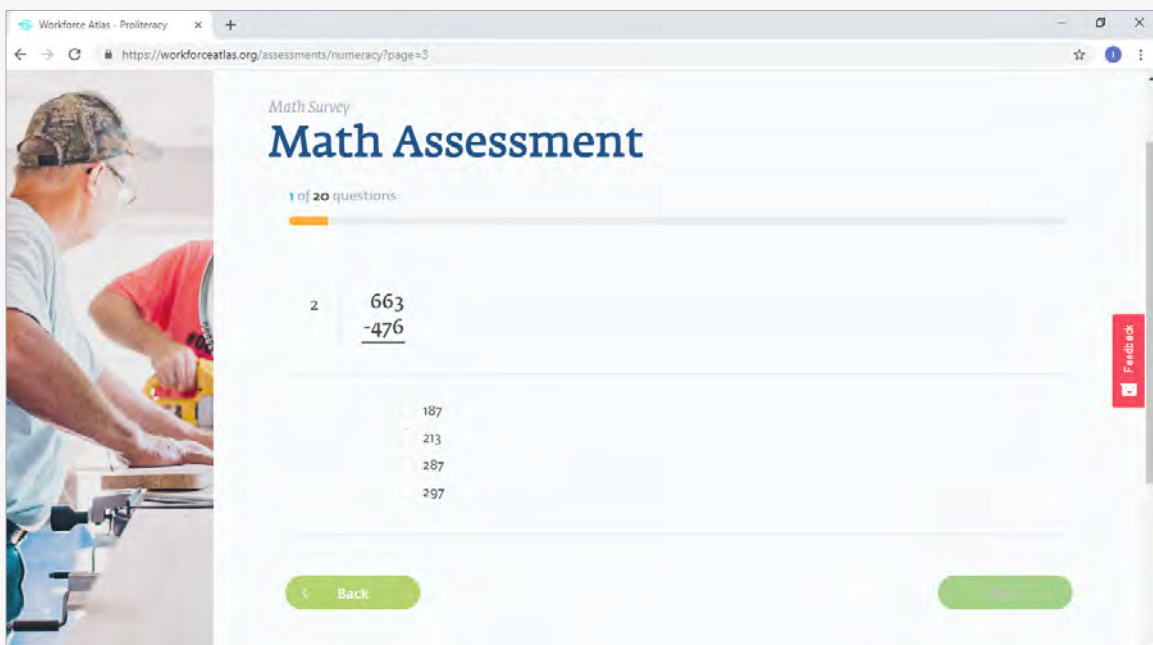
Back Next

Workforce Atlas: Overview

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Math Assessment

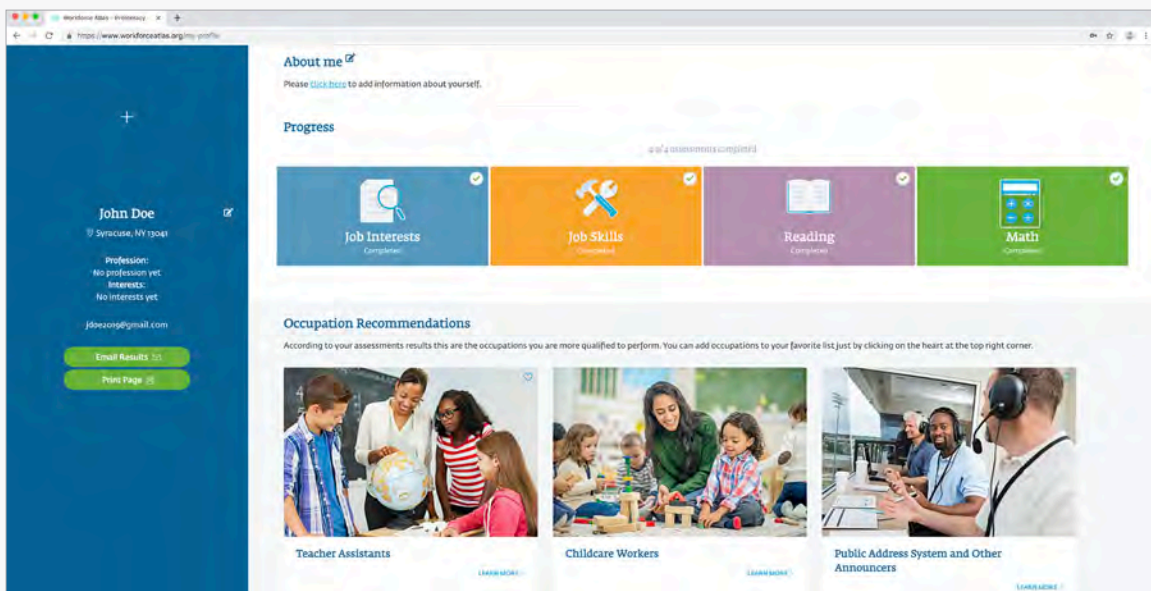
The final assessment is for math skills. The questions in this section are aimed at assessing an individual's mathematical knowledge and skills. Questions range from simple math (addition/subtraction) to more advanced math (algebra/geometry). All questions in this section are multiple choice.



Workforce Atlas: Overview

Occupation Recommendations

After completing all four assessments, the platform directs individuals to occupation recommendations based upon the results of the completed assessments. These are located below the assessments on the profile page.



Workforce Atlas: Overview

Jobs Page

This page is titled “Jobs You Might Like.” Workforce Atlas pulls data directly from the U.S. Department of Labor’s O*Net web platform to provide basic information on hundreds of occupations.

Jobs on this page are not based on the individual’s completed assessments. All visitors—whether they completed an assessment or not—can access and browse this section. However, individuals with profiles will be able to mark occupations as favorites to add them to their profile for easier access.

When first visiting this page, 12 jobs will be displayed, each showing a short preview of the job descriptions. Individuals can explore more jobs by clicking the Load More button at the bottom of the page.

Due to the large number of job titles and descriptions, users will notice two filters at the top of the page. They can use these filters to sort the jobs by industry, alphabetically, and/or by most recent.

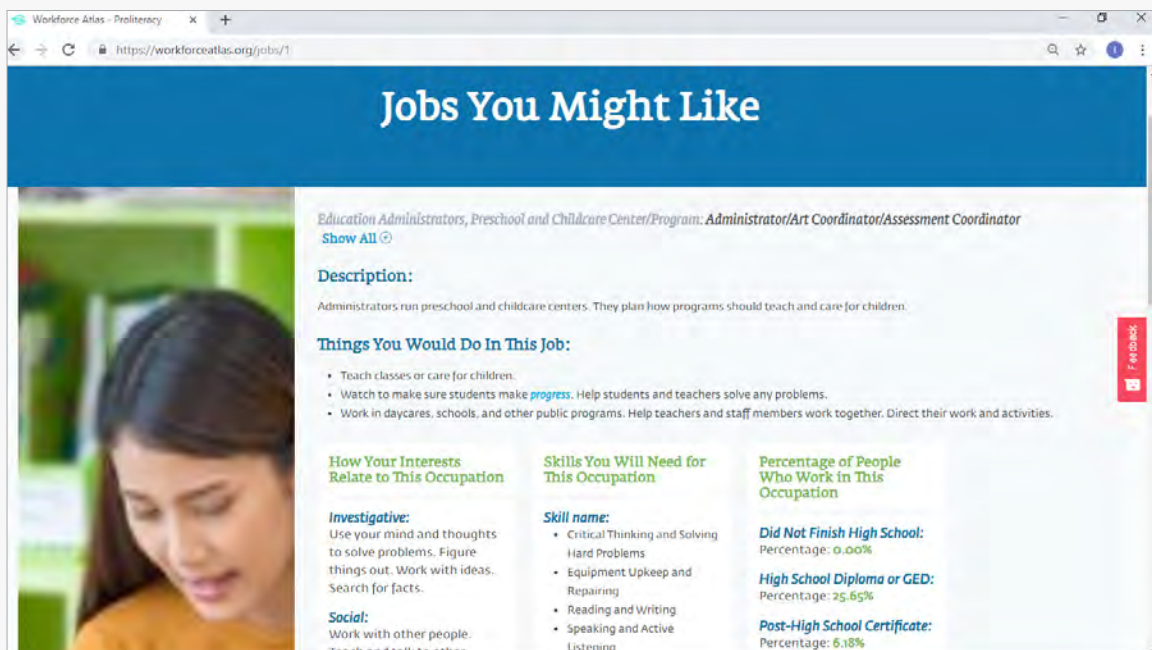
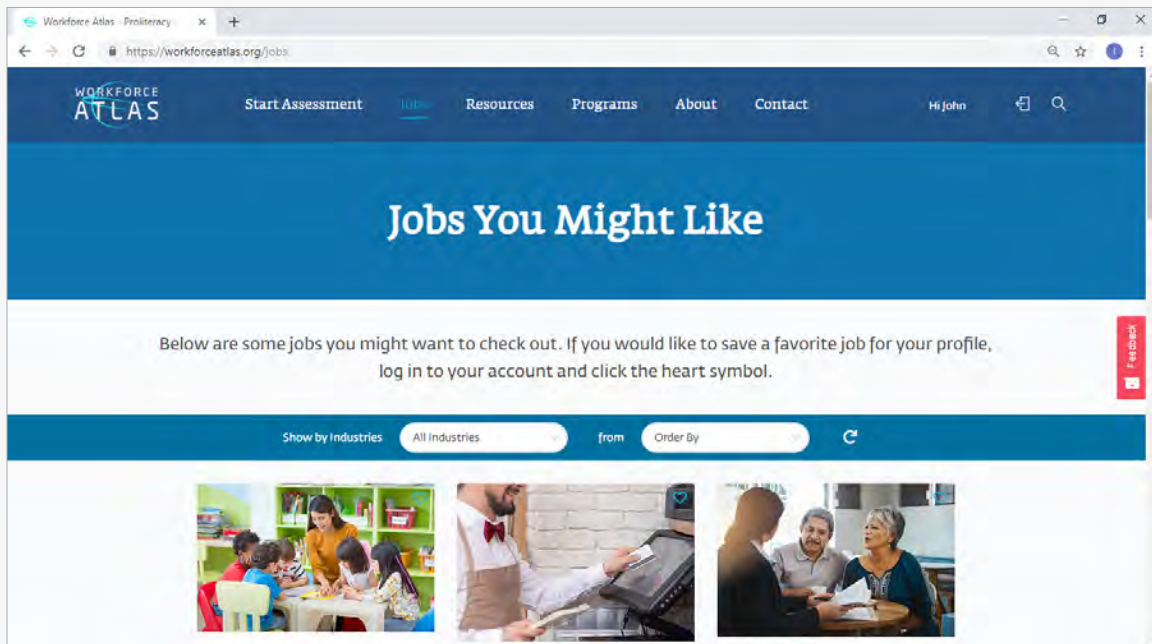
If an individual wants to learn more about a specific job, they can click the Learn More link for access to the extended job page, which includes:

- A description of the job
- What someone would do in that job
- Education levels of people in this occupation
- Specific soft skills or hard skills needed for the job
- Specific reading, writing, and math skills needed for the job

“Yeah it made you feel good about yourself. That you had other objects, or areas you could go to, you didn’t have to stick to the thing that you know or have done. It opened doors. I just actually got accepted to college to do HVAC, yeah this place (pilot site) has helped me a lot.”

—WFA user

Workforce Atlas: Overview



Workforce Atlas: Overview

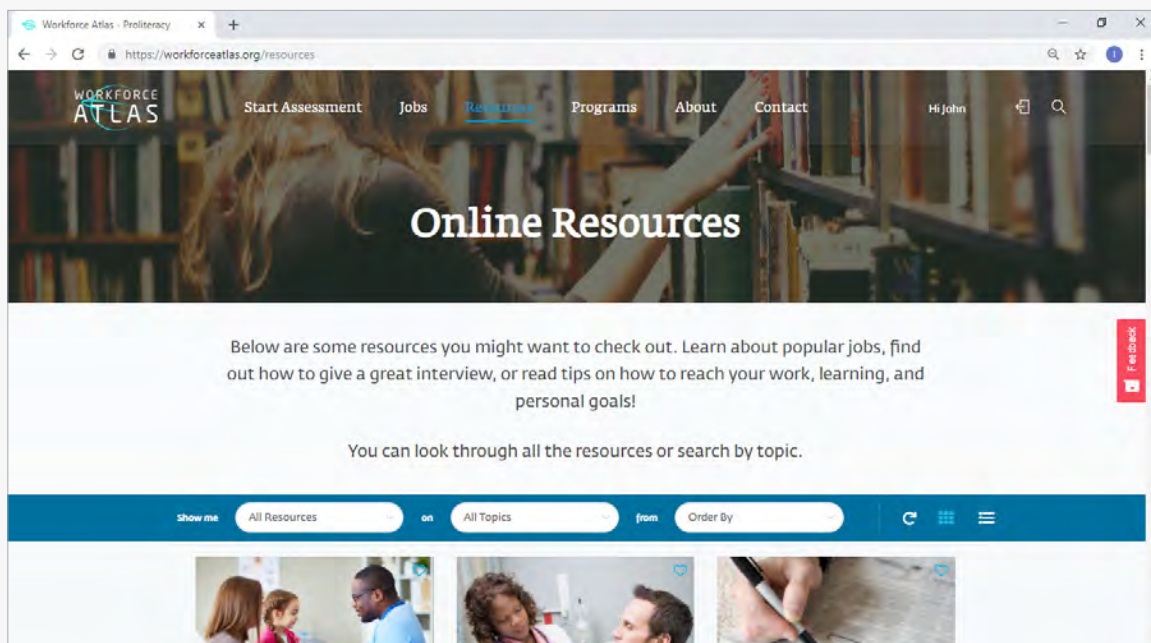
Resources Page

This page is titled “Online Resources.” The resources on this page are not based on the individual’s completed assessments—all visitors to the platform can access and browse this section. However, individuals with profiles will be able to mark resources as favorites to add them to their profile for easier access.

Resources were collected from a wide variety of sources with the goal of providing additional guidance in helping individuals achieve their work, learning, and personal goals. Examples include:

- Resume template
- Interview tips
- Industry fact sheets
- Workforce writing exercises
- Videos about small business ownership, immigrant-owned businesses, and soft-skills
- Guides about health care careers, job interviewing, job searching, starting a new job, and job search tips for ex-offenders

The resource page has three filter options allowing users to filter by the type of resource, the topic, and can sort results alphabetically or by date. This page will continue to be updated as new resources become available.



Workforce Atlas: Overview

Programs Page

This page is titled “Programs Near You” and is meant to connect individuals to additional resources in their communities that can better assist them in achieving their learning, professional, or personal goals.

An individual can enter their zip code and the distance they are able to travel, and the map will display a list of local adult literacy/adult education organizations. The organizations listed are pulled directly from the National Literacy Directory (www.nationalliteracydirectory.org). If users have “auto location” enabled on their computer, the list of local organizations will automatically populate.

The screenshot displays the 'Programs Near You' page on the Workforce Atlas website. The page features a navigation menu with links for 'Start Assessment', 'Jobs', 'Resources', 'Programs', 'About', and 'Contact'. A search bar is present with the text 'Hi John' and a magnifying glass icon. The main heading is 'Programs Near You' with the instruction: 'Type your zip code in the space beneath "Search by Zip Code" to find literacy and learning organizations close to you.' Below this, there is a search form with '13210' entered in the 'Search by Zip Code' field and '5 miles' selected in the 'Within' dropdown. A search button with a magnifying glass icon is to the right. Below the search form, a message states 'We found 21 results for you'. Two results are visible: 'Westcott Adult GED Program' and 'High School Equivalency Classes'. The 'Westcott Adult GED Program' listing includes the address '826 Euclid Ave, Syracuse, NY 13210', the phone number '(315) 478-8634', and a link to 'http://www.westcottcc.org/GED.html'. The 'High School Equivalency Classes' listing includes the address '826 Euclid Ave, Syracuse, NY 13210' and the phone number '(315) 478-8634'. To the right of the text is a map of the Syracuse, NY area with several location pins. A large blue pin is highlighted in the center of the map. The browser's address bar shows 'https://workforceatlas.org/near-programs'.

Workforce Atlas: Overview

About Page

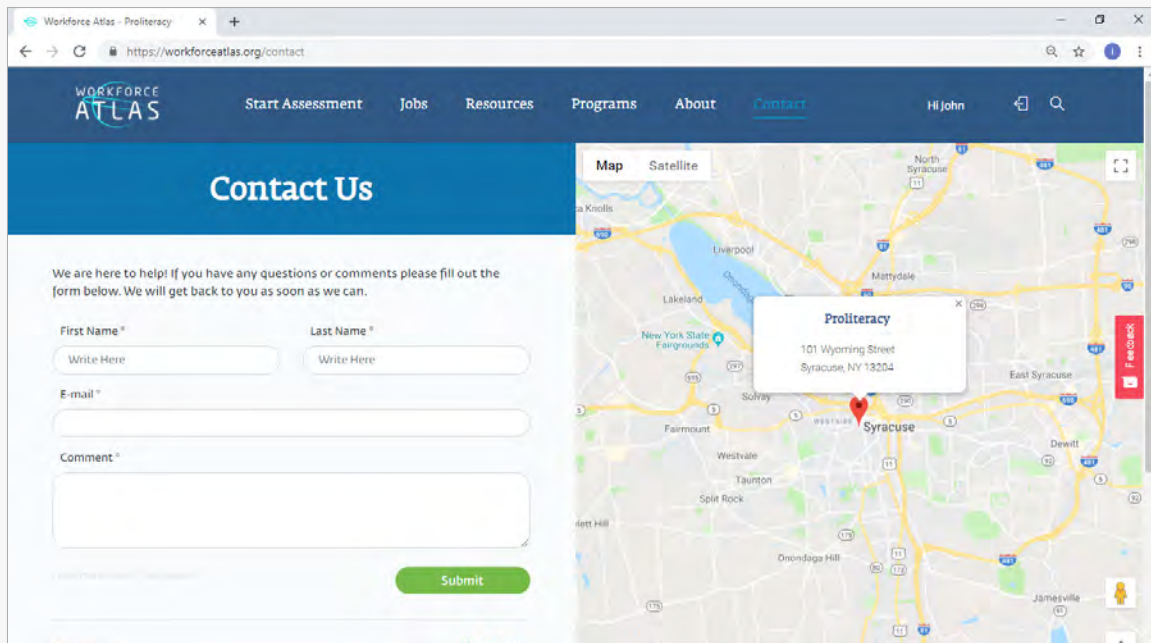
This page is titled “About Workforce Atlas.” It provides users with information about the background and partnerships that created Workforce Atlas.



Workforce Atlas: Overview

Contact Page

This page is titled “Contact Us.” Individuals are encouraged to use this form for feedback, questions, or comments. After they complete the form with their name, email and comment, it is sent directly to ProLiteracy.



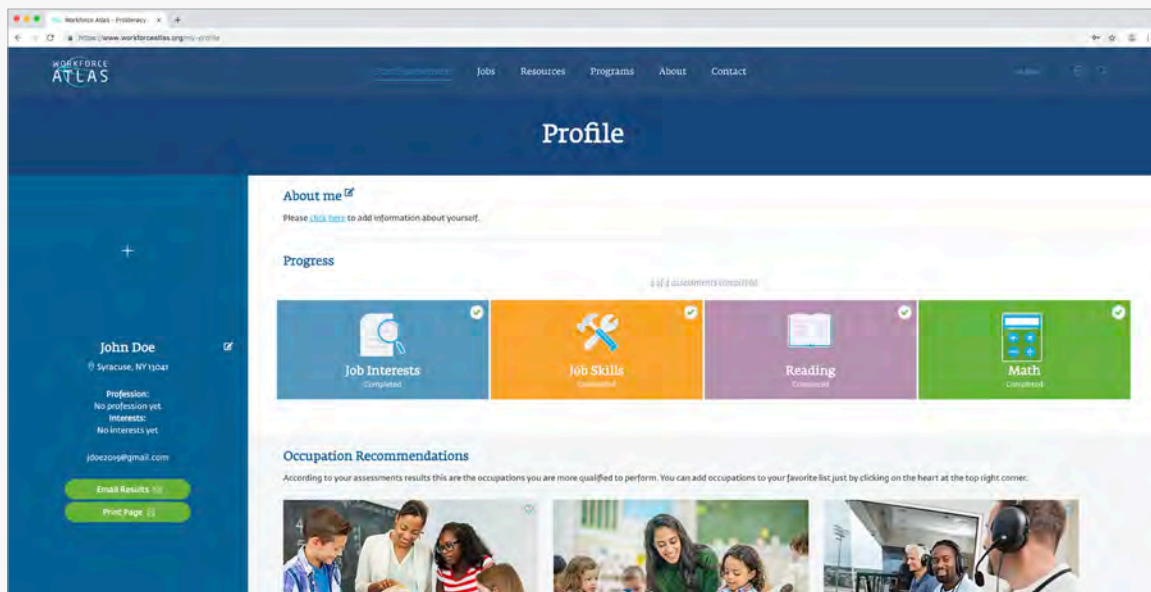
The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://workforceatlas.org/contact>. The page has a dark blue header with the Workforce Atlas logo and navigation links: Start Assessment, Jobs, Resources, Programs, About, and Contact. The main content area is titled "Contact Us" and contains a form with the following fields: First Name (with a "Write Here" placeholder), Last Name (with a "Write Here" placeholder), E-mail, and Comment. A green "Submit" button is located at the bottom right of the form. To the right of the form is a map of Syracuse, NY, with a red pin marking the location of ProLiteracy at 101 Wyoming Street, Syracuse, NY 13204. The map also shows various landmarks and streets in the area.

“It was helpful for me to know what I could be doing, but also that what I’m doing now is relevant, I’ve done guest services and they recommended a lot of jobs related to guest services. So, it helps me make sure I’m on the right track.”

—WFA user

Helpful Features

Workforce Atlas was designed with some helpful features to create personalized profiles to maximize the user experience. Below is a brief explanation of these features.



Some features of the platform are ONLY available if individuals create a login. These features include:

Saving Assessments and Progress

Once an individual creates a login, they can start and finish their assessments at any time. While completing an assessment, users are able to logout at any time and their progress will be saved. Upon logging back in they can pick up where they left off. The saving feature allows lower-level learners to take as much time as needed to finish the assessments. It is also ideal for individuals without access to a personal computer or internet who may be completing the assessments on a public computer.

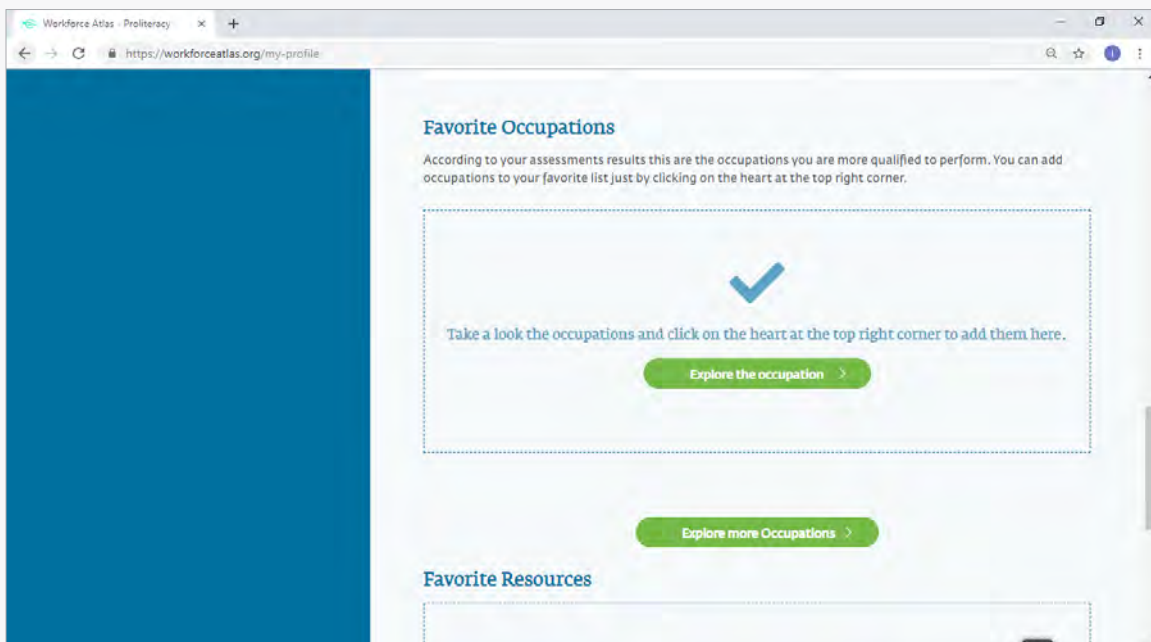
Upon logging in, users will see four assessment boxes. Once someone has completed one section of the assessment, the next section is unlocked. If a section of the assessment is not completed, the number of questions left to complete will show in red in the upper right.

Sending and Sharing Assessment Results

Once individuals create a login and complete their assessments, their occupation recommendations are saved in their personal profile. Individuals can email their recommendations and/or print them at any time.

Favorites

By creating a profile, individuals can mark information within the platform as favorites. Favorites are saved in their profile and can be easily accessed every time they login. Users can do this by clicking on the heart symbol located in the upper right corner of a job or resource they want to favorite.



Pilot Background

ProLiteracy's goal in creating Workforce Atlas was to develop a quality platform that would be useful with diverse audiences. To accomplish this, Workforce Atlas was piloted for over five months with four different organizations nationally. Additionally, ProLiteracy worked with an outside evaluation team from Results for Development (R4D) to collect data from each pilot site.

R4D analyzed all of the test data and provided a comprehensive summary to ProLiteracy at the end of the five-month pilot.

Pilot Data Sources:

- Learning document: submitted weekly by pilot sites, reflecting on the experience of implementing Workforce Atlas
- Biweekly calls to discuss pilot experiences and reflect on progress made
- Post-use survey: brief survey administered by pilot sites after the users completed assessments and reviewed job recommendations
- Focus group discussions: R4D engaged with users and pilot sites seeking to understand their perspectives and experiences using Workforce Atlas; focus group discussions were in-person at each site
- Website data: data on assessment completion and platform use, broken down by pilot sites; this information was collected on the administrative portal of the site

The four pilot organizations varied in size, services offered, clients served, and operating budgets. The objective was to learn from the unique experiences of each pilot site as they incorporated Workforce Atlas into their programming. The four pilots engaged a total of 283 individuals. The most prevalent traits among the learners were:

- unemployed
- did not finish high school
- identified as African American
- were between 20-29 and 50-59 years old.

Because every organization knows its learners/clients best, the information in this guide is being shared to help organizations incorporate the platform into their own programming. It may be useful to identify which of the pilot sites is most similar to your organization and draw from their experiences to make the best use of the platform.

Pilot Site 1: Small Adult Basic Education Program

The first site was a small Adult Basic Education (ABE) center that provided literacy support, tutoring, and connection to basic services and resources, supporting their clients to meaningfully engage in society. It integrated the Workforce Atlas platform in the following ways:

- One-on-one tutors guided learners through the Workforce Atlas assessments.
- Learners completed the assessments as part of a computer course.
- Instructors gave learners an opportunity during class to explore the Jobs and Resources pages on the platform.



After completing the pilot, this organization:

- Continues to use Workforce Atlas and finds the resume template in the Resource section to be very helpful for its learners.
- Finds that the platform adds value to its program.
- Recognizes that ABE centers face increasing pressure to provide workforce development but sometimes lack the capacity to do so. The Workforce Atlas platform can provide assistance with this challenge. Since the platform is a free, ready-made tool, small programs can easily begin implementing this immediately with their learners.

Pilot Site 2: Mid-Size Community Center Program

The site was a community center specializing in vocational and workforce readiness programs offered at a subsidized rate in order to improve the quality of lives in its community. It integrated in the Workforce Atlas platform in the following ways:

- It was used during one-on-one support.
- The platform was introduced in a job readiness class offering basic workforce development skills.
- The platform was made available during open resource lab time.
- The platform was offered during its vocational training program.

Piloting

After completing the pilot, this organization:

- Saw success implementing the platform into its workforce and job readiness courses.
- Finds it helpful to implement the Workforce Atlas platform and assessments in a larger group setting as part of a workshop or class. This has allowed for learners to complete the assessments at a higher rate and for greater follow-up with users.

Pilot Site 3: Mid-Size Social Service Program

The third site was a social service provider offering adult literacy and certification courses as well as employment assistance programs with the goal of achieving self-sufficiency for individuals and families. This site integrated the Workforce Atlas platform in the following ways:

- The platform was used in ABE classes (including high school equivalency and English language literacy programs).
- It was introduced as part of new client orientation.
- It incorporated Workforce Atlas assessments into “Back to Work” workshops for adults over 50.

After completing the pilot, this organization:

- Continues to use the platform in its ABE courses and back-to-work one-on-one counseling
- Found that adult learners focused on self-improvement, ELL, career path exploration, or who were seeking certifications such as an HSE credential found value in the platform.

Pilot Site 4: Large Workforce Development Agency

The fourth site provides a single point of entry to the workforce system for its clients—bringing businesses, job seekers, and training providers together with the goal of providing employment for every job seeker. This site integrated the Workforce Atlas platform in the following ways:

- The platform was introduced as part of its new client orientation.
- It combined one-on-one check-ins with resource lab time to complete the platform assessments.

Implementation Ideas and Best Practices

After completing the pilot, this organization:

- Determined that workforce development agencies who consider themselves “one-stop shops” are not as likely to use Workforce Atlas themselves.
- Believes that larger workforce development agencies can function as the recipient of a “warm hand-off” or a more personalized referral from another organization that uses Workforce Atlas with their clients.

Additional Feedback:

Based on the in-depth focus group discussions that took place at each of the four pilot sites, the following feedback was received from users of the Workforce Atlas platform.

- Many users felt they received accurate occupation recommendations that they would consider and/or are already pursuing.
- Users felt it inspired confidence and made them feel good about themselves and their possibilities for the future.
- Users found the resume template included in the Resources section of Workforce Atlas very helpful.

Implementation Ideas and Best Practices

Based on information and feedback gathered from the pilot sites, below are some implementation ideas and best practices recommend for how Workforce Atlas can add value to different types of service providers.

During the pilot, we found that the size of an organization (number of clients served, budget size) did have an effect on the way organizations were able to use Workforce Atlas.

Smaller organizations appreciated that access to Workforce Atlas is free, as they lack resources for a dedicated staff person or department for workforce development. Smaller organizations also found that for individuals with low-literacy skills it was helpful to provide additional staff guidance to help them take full advantage of the Workforce Atlas platform.

Larger organizations determined that Workforce Atlas could be easily integrated into existing workforce development or literacy curricula. Larger organizations also tended to have more access to computers, internet, and staff for individual follow-up.

Implementation Ideas and Best Practices

Ideas for Implementation

Based on our testing of Workforce Atlas, below are two possible scenarios that may occur within organizations, along with possible activity ideas for implementation:

1. Students taking a HSE-prep course at a public library are challenged to think about career opportunities and options after completing their HSE.

Possible Activity

Students are referred to a computer lab to use Workforce Atlas, complete the assessments, and bring the results to their teacher. The exercise helps them test and practice their literacy and numeracy skills as well as provide insight into available occupations and related educational requirements.

2. Students at a workforce development center are referred to an individual career counselor to complete 10 sessions aimed at helping them explore and create a plan to achieve their career goals.

Possible Activity

A career counselor directs a student to complete Workforce Atlas assessments as a starting point before their counseling sessions. The career counselor uses the student's assessment results and occupation recommendations to help the student create education goals, search for jobs, and seek other community resources.



Implementation Ideas and Best Practices

Best Practices

Based on information and feedback gathered while piloting Workforce Atlas, below are some best practices that may help with implementation.

The Navigator

Workforce Atlas can be a successful tool for individuals when introduced by a mentor, coach, or teacher. Individuals had a higher success rate when introduced to Workforce Atlas through a trusted individual. This provided users with a forum for asking questions and proved to increase their completion rates of assessments.

Curriculum Integration

In addition to being introduced to Workforce Atlas by a navigator, users had a higher completion rate for assessments and accessed resources more when Workforce Atlas was integrated into an existing curriculum or program. This integration provided additional motivation and encouragement.

Detailed Next Steps

Many users wanted clear and more actionable steps to take after completing the assessments and receiving their occupation recommendations. Pilot sites were better able to engage with users by helping them define these next steps. Examples included connecting them to further educational resources through the Programs section to build skills needed to pursue their occupation recommendations and directing them to the Resource page to work on resume development.

Confidence Building

Some users felt that the occupation recommendations provided to them were unrealistic or unattainable. In these cases, when staff offered additional support through goal setting and educational planning, confidence and engagement was increased. Users were also encouraged to visit the Resource section to help them continue their journey.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some of the most frequently asked questions that were asked by individuals during testing of Workforce Atlas:

I found the assessments difficult and I'm having trouble, what should I do?

Some individuals may find the questions in the assessments difficult, especially if they are at a lower literacy level or are an ESL student. These assessments were specifically designed to be accessible to anyone using the platform. Individuals should try their best to answer the questions.

Ways individuals can somewhat alleviate this issue are to:

- complete the assessments in multiple sittings to avoid fatigue or discouragement
- work with a facilitator who can use this opportunity to teach student critical thinking skills, i.e. process of elimination, best choice strategies, etc.
- provide a language line or interpreter for ESL learners if possible

Where is my score from my assessments, I want to know which questions I answered incorrectly?

The purpose of the Workforce Atlas assessments are to provide users with an occupation recommendation, therefore, no actual "score" is provided upon finishing the assessments. It will be helpful for facilitators to frame the purpose of the assessments and encourage users to see the recommendations as a guideline in order to set expectations.

Can I re-do my assessment?

Unfortunately, assessments can only be completed one time and you are unable to go back into the assessments.

How do I share my assessment recommendations?

By creating a login, users have the option to share or print your results using a button on their profile page.

I completed my assessments and I want to find a local program to work with, how can I do this?

Individuals can visit the Resources tab. On this page they can enter their zip code and set a search radius to find a local program.

I created an account but I can't remember my password, what should I do?

Click the login button at the top of the screen or click Start Assessments. On the login page, click "Forgot Your Password?" under the green Login Button. Enter your email address on the next page. The platform will send you a link to reset your password.

I'm browsing resources and jobs but I am not able to favorite them, what should I do?

Please make sure you are logged into the platform. Once you login the heart icon should appear in the upper right corner of any job or resource you want to save.

I've tried all of the suggestions in the FAQ section and I still need help, what should I do?

Please click the contact button of the site and email us. Please make sure to include a detailed description of the problem you're having and someone will get back to you shortly.

I'm browsing resources and jobs but I am not able to favorite them, what should I do?

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Questions?

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