EARN YOUR CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE

When people think of certified job skills, they often think of professional licenses, like in plumbing or welding, or specialized college degrees.

But there's another type of skill that is just as important in every job: the ability to understand, think clearly, and apply information. The national Career Development Certificate ("CRC") is a credential that helps to document these fundamental skills.

Many employers give hiring preference to CRC holders, and some require the CRC for every job applicant.

The CRC is a certificate for people who may not be eligible for other types of licenses or degrees, or who may want to add to their other qualifications. It is one of the most useful tools for job seekers who want to document their skills, regardless of how much or how little education or experience they have.

The CRC relies on the WorkKeys job skills assessment system developed by American College Testing ("ACT"), a company that also offers the ACT examination for high school seniors.

The first step in getting a CRC is to enroll in Room 403 of Pitt Community College's Greenville Center, 3107 South Memorial Drive, anytime during CRC Open Lab hours. To see the current schedule of Open Lab hours, click on the link in the Scheduling section of the PCC Career Readiness Certificate web page (pittcc.edu/continuing-education/career-readiness-certificate/), or call 493-7549. You do not have to be enrolled in Pitt Community College to pursue a CRC. The CRC is also offered through Literacy Volunteers of Pitt County, 3107 South Evans Street, Suite E, 353-6578.

After enrolling, the student completes a pre-test to determine current skill levels in three areas: reading, applied mathematics, and locating information on charts, graphs, and diagrams. The skills are classified into one of seven skill levels for reading and math, and one of six skill levels for locating information. Students can then improve their skills by completing online lessons and quizzes at higher levels.

The pre-test takes most people about an hour to complete, and each of the online lessons takes about two hours. They can be completed from any internet-connected device including a home computer, a computer at a public library, or the CRC Open Lab. There are no time limits for completing the pre-test or the lessons. Also, the pre-test and each of the lessons can be stopped at any point so the student can return to them later.

All instruction and testing is conducted online through ACT's WorkKeys system. When students believe they are ready (typically within weeks or months), they can be scheduled for the final

exam. The exam includes a 55-minute test with 33-35 questions in each of the three skill areas. About 90% of students pass the test, which requires achieving a skill level of at least 3 in each area. But as with any test, it's better to achieve higher scores than lower scores.

Whatever their scores, earning a Career Readiness Certificate shows that job seekers possess not just key skills, but the initiative to continue learning.

Level 12.2