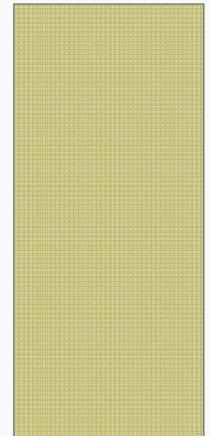


# MEASURING SOFT SKILLS: THE WHAT AND THE HOW?

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NAWDP 2012



# CASAS WORKFORCE SKILLS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM (WSCS)

- Goal: To promote transition of participants into the workforce
- Objective: Participants will use the work readiness skills identified and valued by employers to help get and keep a job



**Workforce Skills  
Certification System**  
a program of **CASAS** and **LRI**

# WORKPLACE BEHAVIORS (SOFT SKILLS)

- Personal Qualities (PQ)\*
  - Integrity
  - Responsibility
  - Self-Esteem
  - Self-Management
  - Sociability
- Customer Care (CC)\*
  - Commitment to Quality
  - Customer Relations
  - Decision Making



\*LRI's Workforce Readiness Skills assessment

To see samples go to: [www.learning-resources.com](http://www.learning-resources.com)

Check if required	<i>Personal Qualities</i>	Skill
	1 Recognizes a situation of right and wrong and acts accordingly.	Integrity
	2 Recognizes the ethical limits of a situation; confronts those who push those limits. Will refer to higher authority if needed.	Integrity
	3 Tries to keep private life from affecting work.	Responsibility
	4 Takes responsibility when an unusual situation demands special attention.	Responsibility
	5 Recognizes when more information is needed; is willing to ask for help if necessary	Responsibility
	6 Recognizes quality work; ready to go the extra mile to make sure that the job gets done properly.	Responsibility
	7 Responds by helping out when needed, even if it means giving up some personal time.	Responsibility
	8 Makes sure the job is done before leaving; does not leave extra work for next shift.	Responsibility
	9 Stands up for self where appropriate; doesn't get defensive when criticized; accepts and learns from critical feedback.	Self-Esteem
	10 Willing to try new things, learn new skills and ask for help when needed.	Self-Esteem
	11 When things get slow, finds something to do rather than wait to be told what to do.	Self-Management
	12 Asks for help when he/she can't do something, whether it's because of a lack of training or information, or things are just too busy to get everything done.	Self-Management
	13 Is open and honest with coworkers because he/she knows it's easier to work with people when everyone gets along.	Sociability
	14 Spends some time chatting with coworkers, but not too much. Knows the difference between "down time", when it's okay to socialize, and when it's time to concentrate on work and to let others concentrate on their work.	Sociability

Check if required	<i>Customer Care Skills</i>	Customer Relations
	1 Remains polite and professional when interacting with customers who make unreasonable demands.	Customer Relations
	2 Faced with a hostile customer, maintains positive demeanor and earnestly attempts to help the customer.	Customer Relations
	3 Increases customer loyalty by immediately addressing concerns and following up.	Customer Relations
	4 Handles competing customer needs in a calm and helpful manner, follows through on commitments.	Customer Relations
	5 Recognizes when it is best to personally handle customer needs versus when to direct the customer elsewhere	Decision Making
	6 Recognizes priorities, then implements solutions based on an understanding of business need.	Decision Making
	7 Decides when to vary from routine operating policies/guidelines and when to adhere to them.	Decision Making
	8 Recognizes when more information is needed for making a decision.	Decision Making
	9 Recognizes the limits of own authority, correctly decides when to use those limits in order to keep the customer satisfied.	Decision Making
	10 Evaluates alternatives strategies for customer satisfaction, then chooses one that minimizes harm and makes the customer feel supported.	Commitment to Quality
	11 Proactively assists peers for the purpose of increasing overall quality of company operations.	Commitment to Quality
	12 Voice and body language communicate to the customer that satisfying the customer's need is of highest importance.	Commitment to Quality
	13 Balances own work schedule against customer needs; willingly makes adjustments.	Commitment to Quality
	14 Determines customer need and improves customer relations by "listening" to customer comments and requests.	Commitment to Quality

# WSCS IS A THREE STEP PROCESS:

- **Step 1** – Profile Skills
- **Step 2** – Develop Skills
- **Step 3** – Certify Skills



# STEP 1 – PROFILE SKILLS

**work-related *academic skills***  
**with CASAS' Reading & Math**  
**assessments**

**work behaviors (*soft skills*)**  
**with LRI's Personal Quality &**  
**Customer Care assessments**



**Workforce Skills Certification System**  
A program of CASAS and LRI

**Workforce Skills Profile**

Assessed by: **Sharon Lusk**  
By Agency: **Stoney Creek Adult School**  
Date Issued: **October 12, 2010**

**Work-related Academic Skills**

Score: **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8**

**Reading**

Work-related Academic Skills usually assessed in this area

Reading is the ability to understand and use written information. It includes the ability to read and understand the meaning of words, sentences, paragraphs, and entire documents. It also includes the ability to use reading to solve problems and make decisions.

**Math**

Math is the ability to use numbers and mathematical symbols to solve problems. It includes the ability to understand and use mathematical concepts and procedures. It also includes the ability to use math to solve real-world problems.

**Soft Skills**

Score: **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8**

**Customer Care**

Customer Care is the ability to provide excellent customer service. It includes the ability to listen to customer needs and concerns, and to provide solutions that meet those needs. It also includes the ability to communicate effectively with customers and to resolve complaints.

**Personal Quality**

Personal Quality is the ability to work effectively and productively. It includes the ability to set goals, manage time, and work well with others. It also includes the ability to adapt to change and to learn from experience.

# STEP 1 – PROFILE SKILLS

- Administer assessments:
  - CASAS Reading and Math via CASAS eTests
  - LRI Workforce Readiness (soft skills) via the web
    - Personal Qualities – 40 minutes
    - Customer Service – 37 minutes
- Create a Workforce Skills Profile (using TOPSpro)
  - Combines results from CASAS and LRI

## Workforce Skills Profile

Awarded to: Damon Lozano  
By Agency: Rolling Hills Adult School  
Date Issued: January 12, 2011

### Work-related Academic Skills

Basic Advanced

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Work-related Academic Skills typically demonstrated at this level
								<b>Reading</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interprets common written material related to everyday needs and to job. Understands the overall structure of most written materials in everyday and work contexts</li> <li>Interprets text in standard organizational formats, including tables and checklists</li> <li>Finds information in directories and simple reference materials</li> <li>Interprets illustrations and simple diagrams</li> <li>Has sufficient reading skills necessary for using a computer for common purposes such as reading routine e-mail and understanding Web page content</li> </ul>
								<b>Math</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses mental math to solve simple problems</li> <li>Converts and calculates with units of time</li> <li>Calculates linear measurement in inches, feet and miles. Uses common measurement instruments</li> <li>Interprets data in tables and charts. Records data in simple formats</li> </ul>

### Soft Skills

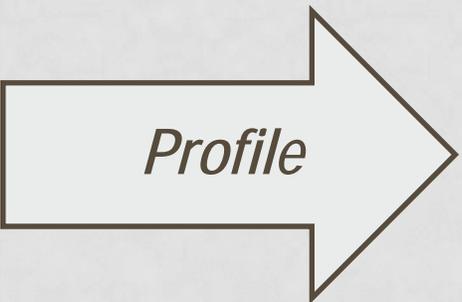
Basic Advanced

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Personal Quality Skills demonstrated
								<b>Integrity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the opportunity to break a rule and probably get away with it, but decides to follow the rule.</li> <li>Tries to stop others who are about to break a rule. Reminds them of the rules and what could happen if they get caught. Will go to a manager or supervisor if necessary.</li> </ul>
								<b>Responsibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tries to keep private life from affecting work.</li> <li>Willing to ask for help, more information or clearer instructions.</li> <li>Responds by helping out when needed, even if it means giving up some personal time.</li> </ul>
								<b>Self-Esteem</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Willing to try new things, learn new skills and ask for help when needed.</li> </ul>
								<b>Sociability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is open and honest with coworkers because he/she knows it's easier to work with people when everyone gets along.</li> </ul>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Customer Care Skills demonstrated
								<b>Commitment to Quality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriately uses voice and body language communicate to the customer that satisfying the customer's need is of highest importance.</li> <li>Balances own work schedule against customer needs; willingly makes adjustments.</li> <li>Determines customer need and improves customer relations by "listening" to customer comments and requests.</li> </ul>
								<b>Customer Relations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remains polite and professional when interacting with customers who make unreasonable demands.</li> <li>Faced with a hostile customer, maintains positive demeanor and earnestly attempts to help the customer.</li> <li>Increases customer loyalty by immediately addressing concerns and following up.</li> </ul>
								<b>Decision Making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizes when it is best to personally handle customer needs versus when to direct the customer elsewhere.</li> <li>Recognizes the limits of own authority, correctly decides when to use those limits in order to keep the customer satisfied.</li> </ul>

# WSCS PROFILE

See sample at  
[www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org)

# RELATING SKILL LEVELS TO THE WSCS PROFILE



Levels	ABE	ESL	DOL
8	High Adult Secondary		Not Basic Skills Deficient
7	Low Adult Secondary		
6	High Intermediate Basic	Advanced ESL	Basic Skills Deficient
5	Low Intermediate Basic	High Intermediate ESL	
4	Beginning Basic	Low Intermediate ESL	
3	Beginning ABE Literacy	High Beginning ESL	
2		Low Beginning ESL	
1		Beginning ESL Literacy	

# WHY A WORKFORCE SKILLS PROFILE?

- Benefit for participants
  - Documents their current academic and soft skills:
    - What the learner knows
    - What soft skills and academic skills need to be developed
- Benefit for employers
  - Profiles job candidate's work readiness skills
    - Informs employer if prospective employee meets job skill requirements

# STEP 2 - DEVELOP SKILLS

***work-related academic skills***  
***(refer to ECS Reading and Math competency report)***

***work behaviors (soft skills)***  
***(refer to LRI's Feedback and Development reports)***

NOTE: Reassess periodically to determine when candidate is ready for certification



**Workforce Skills Profile**

Issued to: Dorian L. Adams  
By Agency: Stirling Hills Adult School  
Date Issued: April 8, 2014  
Certificate was awarded

**Work-related Academic Skills**

Skill	Assessment	Score
Reading	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	5
Math	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	5

**Soft Skills**

Skill	Assessment	Score
Personal Quality Skills Assessment	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	5
Self-Management	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	5

## STEP 2 - DEVELOP SKILLS

- Plan and provide work readiness skill curriculum and instruction:
  - Use WSCS competencies and **QuickSearch\*** to plan **curriculum**
  - Use **diagnostic reports** to target instruction
    - TOPSpro competency reports on learner's reading and math skills
    - LRI Feedback and Development reports on learner's soft skills
- Reassess periodically to measure progress
  - Report EFLs to NRS
  - Create updated WSCS profile

\*find at [www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org)

# FEEDBACK REPORT

- SOCIABILITY:
  - You are understanding, friendly, flexible, and polite; when you are around coworkers, you participate in whatever is going on, instead of trying to be “invisible”; you get along well with others; you take an interest in what others say and do.
  - Situation In Which Your Performance Was Acceptable
  - Is open and honest with coworkers because he/she knows it's easier to work with people when you get along with them.
  - Situation In Which Your Performance Needs Development
  - Spends some time chatting with coworkers, but not too much. Knows the difference between “down time”, when it's okay to socialize, and when it's time to concentrate on work and to let others concentrate on their work.

# COMPREHENSIVE SOFT SKILLS DISCUSSION GUIDE

- SKILL: Integrity – You know right from wrong and try to do the right thing.
- QUESTION: Assume you are at work and one of your co-workers decides that he wants to leave work 15 minutes early, but does not want the manager to whom you both report to know that he is leaving early. As your co-worker is leaving he explains to you that he is leaving early and asks you to “cover for him” in case your manager comes by and asks where he is. What would you do in this situation?
- (Possible probes/additional comments: Assume the Manager comes by and asks you directly where your co-worker is. What would you say? What would you say to the coworker before he leaves?)

# COMPREHENSIVE SOFT SKILLS DISCUSSION GUIDE

## SAMPLE EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Indicating disagreement with the co-worker's deceitful actions.
2. Informing the co-worker he/she will not lie to the manager.
3. Indicating that he/she will tell the manager the true story.

## SAMPLE INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIORS:

1. Seeing nothing wrong with the co-workers behavior (e.g., it's not my business).
2. Agreeing to "cover" for the co-worker or play dumb if questioned by the manager.
3. Indicating disagreement with the co-worker's actions, but a reluctance to state views to the co-worker

# STEP 3 – CERTIFY SKILLS

*work-related academic skills and*

*work behaviors (soft skills):*



# WSCS CERTIFICATION

- Assesses academic skills - measured in the application to job-related tasks/situations
  - Reading at a adult secondary level
  - Math at a adult secondary level
  - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Assesses work behaviors (soft skills)
  - Personal Qualities
  - Customer Care

**National  
Workforce Skills Certificate**

*Presented to*

**Damon Lozano**

*for demonstrating mastery of*

**Work-related Academic Skills and Soft Skills  
on April 27, 2011**

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*Rolling Hills*



**Workforce Skills  
Certification System**  
a program of **CASAS** and **LRI**



The following workforce skills have been identified by the individual's responses to employer-validated and nationally normed assessments.

More detailed information can be found at [www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org) (academic) and at [www.learning-resources.com](http://www.learning-resources.com) (soft skills).

### Work-related Academic Skills

#### Work-related Academic Skills typically demonstrated at this level

##### Reading

- Reads a variety of specialized or technical materials related to job needs, such as operating instructions, manuals, and technical information
- Interprets detailed policies and procedures
- Reads complex diagrams and graphs
- Reads most materials and communications related to job without significant difficulty
- Uses print and Internet-based references and interpret complex Web sites

##### Math

- Interprets data in more complex sorts of graphs and representation
- Summarizes and reports data for a particular purpose
- Presents data in various representations and interpretations
- Applies ratio and proportion
- Creates and interprets graphs of more complex equations
- Works with three-dimensional representations and coordinate systems
- Applies and calculates a variety of rates

##### Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Answers analytical questions that involve critical thinking skills such as making observations, inferences, and deductions, drawing conclusions and making decisions.
- Answers questions that reflects a six-step problem-solving model based on a work-related situation.

### Soft Skills

#### Personal Quality Skills demonstrated

##### Integrity

- Has the opportunity to break a rule and probably get away with it, but decides to follow the rule.
- Tries to stop others who are about to break a rule. Reminds them of the rules and what could happen if they get caught. Will go to a manager or supervisor if necessary.

##### Responsibility

- Tries to keep private life from affecting work.
- Doesn't say "That's not my job." when something unusual or unexpected comes up that needs to be done.
- Willing to ask for help, more information or clearer instructions.
- Recognizes quality work, ready to go the extra mile to make sure that the job gets done right.
- Responds by helping out when needed, even if it means giving up some personal time.
- Makes sure the job is done before leaving, does not leave extra work for next shift.

##### Self-Esteem

- Stands up for self where appropriate; on the other hand, doesn't take it personally when a manager points out incomplete or poorly done work; accepts suggestions for ways to do the job better.
- Willing to try new things, learn new skills and ask for help when needed.

##### Self-Management

- When things get slow, finds something to do rather than wait to be told what to do.
- Asks for help when he/she can't do something, whether it's because of a lack of training or information, or things are just too busy to get everything done.

##### Sociability

- Is open and honest with coworkers because he/she knows it's easier to work with people when everyone gets along.
- Spends some time chatting with coworkers, but not too much. Knows the difference between "down time", when it's okay to socialize, and when it's time to concentrate on work and to let others concentrate on their work.

#### Customer Care Skills demonstrated

##### Commitment to Quality

- Evaluates alternative strategies for customer satisfaction, then chooses one that minimizes harm and makes the customer feel supported.
- Proactively assists peers for the purpose of increasing overall quality of company operations.
- Appropriately uses voice and body language communicate to the customer that satisfying the customer's need is of highest importance.
- Balances own work schedule against customer needs; willingly makes adjustments.
- Determines customer need and improves customer relations by "listening" to customer comments and requests.

##### Customer Relations

- Remains polite and professional when interacting with customers who make unreasonable demands.
- Faced with a hostile customer, maintains positive demeanor and earnestly attempts to help the customer.
- Increases customer loyalty by immediately addressing concerns and following up.
- Handles competing customer needs in a calm and helpful manner, follows through on commitments.

##### Decision Making

- Recognizes when it is best to personally handle customer needs versus when to direct the customer elsewhere.
- Recognizes priorities, then implements solutions based on an understanding of business need.
- Decides when to vary from routine operating policies/guidelines and when to adhere to them.
- Recognizes when more information is needed for making a decision.
- Recognizes the limits of own authority, correctly decides when to use those limits in order to keep the customer satisfied.

# CASAS AS PART OF OTHER SYSTEMS

- National External Diploma Program (NEDP)
  - The Workforce Skills Certification provides a 'Diploma Plus' option for the adult high school graduate
- Singapore's Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ)
  - Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WPLN) credentials accepted by 2,500+ employers
- Maine's WorkReady™
- Washington's I-BEST