



Competency-Based Occupational Frameworks for Apprenticeships

Solutions for improving the quality and consistency of apprenticeship programs

As the United States aims to increase the number and type of apprenticeship programs nationwide, resources to guide the process and meet employers' needs are in demand.

That's because unlike many other countries, the US does not require the use of nationally recognized standards describing occupational requirements or the knowledge and skills apprentices need to perform their job effectively. This has led to an inconsistent apprenticeship development system with little insight into how programs should be structured and what apprentices should learn.

To address this shortcoming, the Urban Institute, with support from the US Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship, has designed 43 occupational frameworks for competency-based apprenticeship programs. These programs allow apprentices to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities, rather than simply recite memorized facts or record hours learning a particular skill. Urban's competency-based frameworks provide high quality standards for various in-demand occupations, such as phlebotomists, wind turbine

technicians, and user experience designers. And the frameworks are nonproprietary: they are available for any employer, government agency, trainer, curriculum developer, and others to use to develop and refine apprenticeship programs.

OUR APPROACH

Urban draws on decades of apprenticeship expertise and collaborates with national experts to design our competency-based occupational frameworks. **To develop the frameworks, we gather as much pertinent information as possible and organize it to:**

Create an occupational overview, which describes the job, attitudes, and behaviors of workers in the position, similar job titles, and potential opportunities for career advancement.

Develop a work process schedule, which details the core job functions and competencies an apprentice might be expected to complete. It is the heart of the framework, reflecting the overall learning plan that the Department of Labor or a state apprenticeship agency must approve for an apprenticeship application.



Outline detailed job functions, which explain the specific knowledge and skills for each competency an apprentice is expected to demonstrate and can be used by sponsors to evaluate an apprentice's job performance.

Once developed, Urban's occupational frameworks are vetted by industry leaders to ensure they meet current labor market expectations. They are then approved and released by the Department of Labor.

WHAT WE OFFER

Urban's experts are available to help you apply our competency-based occupational frameworks to your organization. You can download the frameworks at www.urban.org/cbof to:

- **Design your own apprenticeship** program using our template
- **Start a program** using our work process schedules
- **Refine an existing program** and/or curriculum using the full frameworks as a resource

Urban offers 43 competency-based occupational frameworks in the following sectors:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Business services
- Education
- Energy
- Finance/insurance
- Health care
- Hospitality
- Information technology
- Transportation

To access the frameworks, visit:

www.urban.org/cbof.

For more information, contact us at:

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