

Purpose of the Retail Journey Case

This retail journey case was developed by the retail opportunity network (RON) as an ideal scenario for career exploration and upward mobility utilizing verified skills through the job search, hiring, and onboarding process that includes both human and system interactions. This retail journey case will help to show how RON initiatives are working together to solve barriers and challenges to skills-based hiring in the retail and service industry as well as identify opportunities for new and additional collaboration.

RETAIL JOURNEY CASE:

EXPLORATION OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND UPWARD MOBILITY

Persona

Adrian is a 57-year-old black, Latinx, non-binary person living in Dallas Fort Worth, TX. In high school, Adrian took career and technical education courses and began a career in residential construction. After a decade in construction, Adrian decided to attend part-time community college courses at night to earn a business degree to start their own construction business. However, Adrian had to drop out after two semesters to help their family and never earned a degree. After many years as a homemaker, Adrian is looking to utilize their skills from previous work experience (construction and homemaker) to find a mid-level career in retail with opportunities for growth.

JOB SEARCH



Adrian meets with a workforce development provider that assists Adrian on their journey to find open jobs in their desired career field. The workforce development provider also helps Adrian to translate their past experience into skills and competencies that could be used on a resume and in the hiring process.



The career navigation tool recommends that Adrian fill out an online professional profile to learn more about Adrian and better match their career goals and background.



Adrian completes their professional profile to include information on work history; education, training, and credentials; and volunteer and other activities/accomplishments.



Using the online ATS (applicant tracking system), Adrian enters basic personal identification/contact information and then provides access to their professional profile.



The recruiter and ATS recommends Adrian as a possible candidate for the position but flags some gaps in Adrian's skill sets for the manager position.



The hiring manager selects Adrian for a face-to-face interview after reviewing their skills assessment results, work history, completed business courses at the community college (but no degree), and self-asserted skills as a homemaker.



After the interview the hiring manager decides to hire Adrian and requests approval from the HR department.



The HR department sends Adrian an offer letter.



The HR manager transfers newly hired candidate data to the HRIS system for on-boarding new employees.



Adrian keeps track of verified skills obtained before and on the job to compare their skills and achievements with the position above them for future growth opportunities.

HIRING & PROMOTION

The workforce development provider shows Adrian how to use a career navigator tool to identify fast-growing jobs within the retail industry and connect Adrian with relevant job opportunities that align to their skills and career goals.



Adrian gathers information for their professional profile (i.e., community college transcript, employee record, etc.).



Using Adrian's professional profile, the career navigator tool identifies a manager position in the retail industry for Adrian to apply to online. The professional profile also identifies a few gaps in Adrian's profile and suggests upskilling opportunities to enhance their existing skills for the position.



The recruiter reviews all applications through the ATS and establishes a candidate record for Adrian along with other candidates to further compare their skills and qualifications to the hiring requirements and degree of fit.



The hiring manager reviews the ATS information and recommends Adrian and other candidates for further screening which includes taking online skill assessments related to the manager position to verify that candidates have the knowledge, skills, and abilities for the open position.



During the face-to-face interview, the hiring manager checks Adrian's interpersonal skills for the manager position and confirms cultural fit of the company with Adrian (work hours, expectations, growth opportunities, etc.).



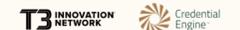
The HR department reviews the applicant profile and checks references and verifies credentials.



Adrian reviews the offer letter and accepts the manager position.



The HRIS system provides Adrian access to and use of their worker/employment record (that includes Adrian's professional profile and an updated record of skills learned in the current job).



ABOUT



NCHEMS is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve strategic decision making in post-secondary education for states, systems, institutions, and work-force development organizations in the United States and abroad. NCHEMS carries out research, development, dissemination, evaluation activities, as well as technical assistance.



Data for the American Dream (D4AD) pilot initiatives in three states (CO, MI, NJ) are providing workers access to current and actionable information about pathways to education and employment opportunities.



The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation is dedicated to strengthening America's long-term competitiveness. The Foundation educates the public on the conditions necessary for business and communities to thrive, how business positively impacts communities, and emerging issues and creative solutions that will shape the future, such as:



Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) is a demand-driven, employer-led approach to closing the skills gap utilizing employer data and supply chain management principles.



An initiative that promotes public-private standards for job descriptions and postings and explores applications for improved jobs data and promoting skills-based hiring.



A network of 500+ organizations working to enable the digital transformation of the talent marketplace, where: all learning counts; skills are used like currency; and learners and workers are empowered with data.



Digital Promise is a nonprofit organization that builds powerful networks and takes on grand challenges by working at the intersection of researchers, entrepreneurs, and educators. The Adult Learning Initiative explores the impact of technology on working-age adults, prioritizing equity-first research and development with a collective impact approach.

- ◆ Learning and Employment Records (LERs) for Equity is a collaborative research and development project that aims to garner greater awareness of how to center the user experience and mitigate racial bias in LER design and implementation.
- ◆ Our micro-credentials learning platform hosts over 500 micro-credentials, or Open Badges, that verify an individual's skill or competency. We work in partnership with learning providers across sectors and states.



The Markle Foundation challenges itself and diverse partners to deploy their varied expertise to identify solutions to critical public problems and achieve systemic change. Markle's priority is advancing solutions toward a labor market that enables workers in America to move into good jobs through its Rework America Alliance, Skillful and Rework America initiatives.



The Rework America Alliance, a coalition of civil rights groups, nonprofits, employers, unions and educators, is opening opportunities for unemployed and low wage workers to move into good jobs, particularly people of color who have been disproportionately impacted by the current economic crisis.



Skillful, a Markle initiative and part of its Rework America Alliance, works with employers, educators, nonprofits, workforce leaders and others to help people get good jobs based on the skills they have or can learn – including through the Skillful Talent Series, Career Coach Training, Job Posting Generator, Skill My Resume.



Credential Engine's mission is to map the credential landscape with clear and consistent information, fueling the creation of resources that empower people to find the pathways that are best for them. We envision a future where millions of people worldwide have access to information about credentials that opens their eyes to the full range of opportunities for learning, advancement, and meaningful careers.



Education Design Lab is a diverse team that brings a critical mix of expertise in higher education, K-12, talent development, policy and entrepreneurship. We are connected in our belief that designing models from the learner perspective can address equity and skills gaps in an incredibly dynamic skills-based economy.

- ◆ The Community College Growth Engine Fund is a unique accelerator working with 6 colleges and systems to design 18 employer-validated micro-pathways designed to connect low-wage and entry-level workers to in-demand jobs that pay at-or-above median wage and put them on a path toward a degree.



The Open Skills Network (OSN) is a coalition of employers, educational institutions, military, and other stakeholders dedicated to advancing skills-based education and hiring through the development of open skills data and tools.



National Skills Coalition fights for a national commitment to inclusive, high-quality skills training so that more people have access to a better life, and more local businesses see sustained growth. Since 2000, through expert analysis and technical assistance, organizing, advocacy, and communications, NSC has changed hundreds of state and federal skills policies that have changed thousands of lives.

CRITICAL ASSUMPTIONS

IN THE RETAIL JOURNEY CASE



Workers/job seekers have access to the internet and a working digital device (tablet, desktop, laptop) as well as the digital literacy skills to utilize a digital device.



Learning and employment records are available and accessible to the worker/job seeker, recruiters, ATS, and hiring managers.



Employers are willing and eager to use a skills-based hiring approach and have a data infrastructure that is aligned with skills-based efforts.



Systems are designed to mitigate racial, age, gender biases and gaps in work.



Clear pathway projections are outlined by employers and transparent to employees.



There are standard definitions and a shared common language around skills and competencies.



The tools and artificial intelligence (AI) work as intended.



POINTS OF SUCCESS

IN THE RETAIL JOURNEY CASE

Hiring and career tools/systems (career navigation, HRIS, ATS, professional profiling) are able to ingest and analyze skills and their context to provide informed decisions about career opportunities to recruiters, hiring managers, and job seekers.

The career exploration and hiring process and tools are easily accessible for workforce development providers, learners, and workers with assistance in articulating skills with in-demand hiring needs.

Learning, employment, and other records are machine-actionable to be utilized and analyzed by humans and systems.

Skills and competencies are clearly defined in job postings with future career pathways and their required skills outlined.

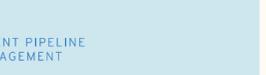
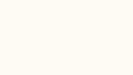
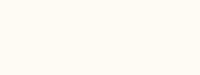
Development of a common language as a way to translate and analyze skills and competencies to reduce barriers and allow for employers and recruiters (including systems) to access a wider potential talent-pool.

Individual agency of skills data are clearly defined and transferable across systems and tools.

Learning and employment records can be updated and utilized over time allowing for reentry to the workforce.

Critical skill sets and credentials are easily verified.

Data collaboratives share in-demand skills from tools and systems that support policymakers, education providers, and workforce intermediaries to identify high value career paths and occupations.



POINTS OF FAILURE

IN THE RETAIL JOURNEY CASE

Hiring and career tools/systems (career navigation, HRIS, ATS, professional profiling) are not publicly available or easy to use without technical support.



A person's learning, employment, and other records are only available in paper copies or PDFs that only humans can interpret (both to apply for jobs and review applicants).



A person's experience and credentials are outdated or unverifiable presenting a barrier to job access and ability to apply.



Professional profiling and recruitment tools can only search job opportunities by keywords without context or granular skills data.



Systems have no common way of communicating and transferring skills data in a way that is interoperable across systems.



Job postings and hiring requirements provided by employers are not clearly defined nor accurately reflect the skills and competencies needed for the position.



Machine or human bias in the hiring process removes qualified talent.



Workforce intermediaries lack the required knowledge and access to resources to connect to in-demand jobs.



Potential candidates lack understanding and skills to successfully move through the hiring process (including ability to create cover letters, generate references, or perform in an interview).