

What resources are available at Durham Tech?

Durham Tech offers a number of services to help students, alumni, and community members obtain the jobs they want — and advance in their new workplaces. The following are a few of the key services available through Durham Tech:

- ☛ *Career Services* – Students and alumni can obtain free assistance with job searches, résumé preparation, and interviewing skills. Contact Career Services for an appointment at 919-686-3652.
- ☛ *Human Resources Development Program* – Members of the community can take advantage of job-seeking workshops, assistance with résumé preparation, practice interviews with area employers, and workshops to improve basic skills. Contact the HRD Program at 919-686-3603. HRD services are available at a nominal cost; some community members may qualify for subsidized participation.
- ☛ *Campus Learning Center* – Students can obtain free assistance with their writing, reading, and math skills on the lower level of the Educational Resources Center (library). Contact the CLC at 919-686-3554.
- ☛ *Durham Tech Classes and Instructors* – Instruction and faculty at Durham Tech are the most important resources available to help you succeed in the job market. Call 919-686-3333 for details about career programs.

“Sloppy looks mean sloppy work.”

William Scudder, Owner,
Blue Door Designs

Becoming Workplace-Ready at Durham Tech

The Teaching-Learning Center
1637 Lawson Street
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Durham Technical
Community
College



Learning Matters

Becoming Workplace- Ready at Durham Tech



Today's employers have fewer spots to fill and more prospective employees available.

Being workplace-ready can help you get and keep the job you want.

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“Communication skills are what make the difference between a good employee and a great employee.”

Beth Travis,
Public Information Director,
Wake County Government

What does it mean to be “workplace-ready”?

When you start a new job, you can't be expected to know everything right away. Employers expect to orient new hires to the specific rules and procedures they will use in their new positions and to help build their knowledge of job-specific information. However, employers also expect new hires to possess an underlying foundation of basic skills and qualities on which to build new knowledge. Being “workplace-ready” means that you, as a prospective employee, possess the basic skills and qualities that employers are looking for — the skills and qualities that will make you both highly trainable and highly productive. Workplace-ready employees are a good investment for employers.

What skills and qualities are employers looking for?

Studies and surveys conducted over the last decade show that employers are looking for the following basic skills and qualities in their new hires:

- ☛ *Oral Communication Skills* – Employers expect entry-level employees to speak clearly and politely on the telephone, in dealing with customers, and in dealing with other employees. They also expect employees to present verbal information and ideas in a logical, concise, and accurate fashion.
- ☛ *Written Communication Skills* – Employers expect entry-level employees to be able to write coherent email messages, memoranda, instructions, evaluations, incident reports, and even proposals. They expect accurate grammar and spelling, as well as logical ordering and clear transmission of information.
- ☛ *Interpersonal Skills* – Employers expect their new hires to work well in teams by being cooperative, supportive, and communicative.
- ☛ *Personal Qualities* – Employers desire entry-level employees who demonstrate promptness, respect, responsibility, honesty, sociability, self-management, self-esteem, and basic etiquette.
- ☛ *Other Basic Skills* – Entry-level employees need to be able to read and think critically, interpret oral and written instructions accurately, and use basic technology effectively (word processing software, email, and the Internet).

“On time every day shows they're willing to try.”

Holly Martin,
Human Resources,
Bryant Durham
Electric

Why do YOU need to be workplace-ready?

Being workplace-ready enhances your chances of getting, keeping, and advancing in a job that you want. It shows that you are willing to put effort into your work, eager to learn, and ready to represent your new employer well.

What can you do to improve your workplace-readiness?

- ☛ Enhance your oral communication skills by taking a public speaking course.
- ☛ Improve your written communication skills, as well as basic math and computer skills, by taking classes and working closely with instructors.
- ☛ Practice positive personal qualities such as promptness, basic etiquette, making eye contact, speaking clearly, and following directions — in class and in every life situation.
- ☛ Obtain assistance with résumé preparation and practice interviews.
- ☛ Conduct general research on the company for which you are interviewing so that you are knowledgeable and appear interested.
- ☛ Put your “best foot forward” during your interview.

The Teaching-Learning Center at Durham Tech would like to thank Dr. Nancy Martin-Young from Wake Technical Community College for sharing her research on what area employers expect from entry-level employees. The skills and qualities listed here are culled from her research results.