

Summary and Ranking of Training Recommendations for the Job Creation Investment Fund

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Job Creation Investment Fund San Mateo County

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	ii
1. Introduction	1
2. Training Themes Common Across Employers	3
3. The Role of Training in Strategies for Advancement	6
4. Career Ladder Examples and Relevant Training Programs	8
5. Assessments of Available Training Programs	12
5A. STEPS and JOB\$ NOW Curriculum and Instruction	12
5B. Relevance of Courses to Labor Market Training Needs	13
5C. Course Relevance to Advancement Strategies	15
5D. Occupational Training Programs	17
6. Recommendations for Program Adjustments	20
Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided	23
References	29

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Job Creation Investment Fund (JCIF) was created to facilitate the transition of welfare clients from welfare dependency to economic self-sufficiency. Given the extremely low levels of unemployment in the County, the best way to accomplish this goal was to focus on job matching, retention, and advancement. As a first step, we investigated where CalWORKs clients were already finding jobs, and the skill sets of some CalWORKs clients who were having difficulty finding jobs. We then interviewed 31 County employers in order to learn employers' requirements for entry-level employees, what opportunities and prerequisites exist for advancement in their companies, and what experiences they have had hiring current and former CalWORKs clients. These results were described in an earlier report.

Employers raised a number of concerns about the gaps in training and experience they noticed among both recent applicants and hires for entry-level positions. In this report, we describe in more detail the types of training programs employers would value most for their entry-level employees and entry-level job applicants. Addressing common skill deficits is the way to most improve job matching, job retention, and job advancement for current and former welfare clients. First, we categorize those skills most important to employers and describe them here. Next, we describe how these training needs mesh with the advancement strategies we described in the earlier report, and give example career ladders with the necessary training. Finally, we assess the extent to which these skill deficits are addressed by existing training programs in the County. In the cases where it appears more could be done to match the training provision to the stated needs of employers, we mention them here as well. In some cases, the recommendations and needs of employers lead us to make suggestions regarding ways in which County training and education programs might be adapted or expanded in order to improve job matching, retention, and advancement for current and former welfare clients.

During the interviews, it was clear that employers believed there were a number of skill deficits among entry-level applicants and employees. In this report, we summarize the skill sets employers found to be most lacking. Employers find that welfare clients attempting to enter the workforce in any industry could most benefit from improved work/life, customer service, computer, and English communication skills. In addition, employers mentioned deficiencies in basic skills (reading, writing, and basic math) and also indicated that some occupational training or credentialing programs are lacking in the County, particularly in the health care professions.

Each of these types of training needs have different degrees of relevance for the three primary strategies for advancement described in the Labor Market Study. Specifically, we identified the following training programs in regards to job advancement strategies:

- ***Advancement on the job:***
Employees who seek to advance within a company would benefit from training programs that emphasize initiative and communication skills, in addition to work/life skills. Supervisory training programs may also be helpful in service-oriented industries, where promotion often requires management skills.

- ***Advancement by changing employers:***
Employees who seek to advance by changing employers primarily obtain skills through job experience, although training in initiative, communication, job search skills, and job networking facilitate job changes. Work/life skills are crucial to obtaining both the initial job and the next one.
- ***Advancement by pursuing education:***
Employees who seek to obtain further education or training in order to advance should pursue the relevant occupational training programs for their industry. The greatest challenge for these employees is finding affordable training at convenient hours.

A brief overview of both County-provided work/life skills classes (STEPS and JOB\$ NOW) – which are required of CalWORKs clients – and private basic skills and occupational training programs suggests that while many available programs meet some of the needs of area employers, improvements might be made to better prepare current and former CalWORKs clients for entry into the workforce. STEPS and JOB\$ NOW both address three of the four skills areas our analyses found employers desire in entry-level job applicants: work/life skills, such as attendance and punctuality, self-presentation, interview, and job search skills; customer service skills; and computer skills. These courses do not address the fourth area, ESL. The following points summarize our findings:

- While trainers emphasize punctuality and daily attendance for both the classes and work, there are few consequences for students who are tardy or absent. Indeed, trainers were sometimes late to the classes we observed, setting a bad example.
- Students are taught job search skills such as completing an application, creating a resume, and how to conduct oneself in an interview (appropriate physical appearance, listening skills, and how to convey skills and abilities). Job networking is also discussed, which is important to both finding a job and advancing by changing employers. Based on the second mock interviews we observed, students showed improvement in this area by the end of the course.
- While initiative is illustrated and rewarded in the classes, the frequency with which employers mentioned it as the key to advancement suggests that this could be emphasized more explicitly in the classes.
- The course emphasizes immediate work and places little emphasis on long-range career planning, such as saving for further training or identifying what skills and education a student will need to obtain their ideal job.

A quick review of English as a Second Language (ESL), General Equivalence Diploma (GED), and Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes indicates that these classes are free, abundant, and are offered in several locations throughout the county and at several different times, including evenings and weekends. Basic computer familiarity classes (courses that give instruction in mouse, email, and internet use, for example) are somewhat less available, and can be quite expensive.

Occupational training programs were in general less available than basic skills classes. More specifically:

- Clerical training programs are common, with costs similar to computer familiarity classes.
- Early Childhood Education training programs are available at community colleges for \$11/unit, but most are not on major public transportation routes. Consequently, transportation may be an issue preventing the utilization of these classes by CalWORKs clients.
- Specialized training programs in the medical professions are relatively rare despite the high demand for their graduates. Often, programs are offered only as full-time courses on weekdays, making them difficult to complete while holding a full-time job.
- Many employers noted that they prefer to hire graduates of training programs with a work component; however, many programs offered in the county do not incorporate on the job training.

Based on the above analyses, we make the following recommendations for training programs in San Mateo County, which are categorized by their relevance to STEPS/JOB\$ NOW, basic skills classes, and occupational training programs:

STEPS/JOB\$ NOW Classes

- 1. Courses could be more closely aligned with the demands of the workplace, and have real and enforced consequences of increasing severity for failing to meet performance expectations.**
- 2. Courses could incorporate training on the role of initiative in advancement for each of the three strategies for advancement (on the current job, in changing employers, and in pursuing additional education).**
- 3. Courses could provide information about how to pursue more advanced training while working, which would help clients plan more effectively for advancement in careers requiring certification or additional education.**
- 4. More role-playing in customer service and communication skills may help clients deal with conflict on the job.**
- 5. Including more mock interviewing in the courses (with actual employers) would better prepare clients for actual job interviews. Ideally, these mock interviews would require “applicants” to display initiative and desire for advancement.**

Basic Skills

- 1. Providing ESL courses at employer locations would bring English language instruction to some of those most in need of and most able to benefit from increased English proficiency. Employers with large numbers of non-native English speaking employees were very interested in this idea.**
- 2. Other basic skills courses (reading, writing, basic math, and computers) could also be welcome at employer sites.**

Occupational Training Programs

- 1. More health-related training programs are necessary, and more programs that hold classes in the evenings and weekends are essential for participants who are currently employed.**
- 2. One trainer noted that working students have a much higher completion rate in training programs if they work on campus. Further work could be done to investigate the possibility of leveraging work-study as a way to combine work and school while receiving CalWORKs.**
- 3. Employers and trainers repeatedly noted the difficulty entry-level workers have in maintaining reliable childcare and means of transportation. This impacts the ability to complete training programs and retain jobs. It is possible that additional promotion of already available services through the STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes would be sufficient, but there may be a role for the County in providing additional support services, such as emergency childcare and emergency transportation assistance for those who have left CalWORKs.**

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Job Creation Investment Fund (JCIF), administered by the California Trade and Commerce Agency, is to facilitate the transition of welfare clients from reliance on public assistance to economic self-sufficiency. As stated in the Job Training Plan (September 30, 1999), San Mateo's JCIF study moves away from job creation and focuses on job matching, retention, and advancement for current and former CalWORKs clients. Thirty-one San Mateo County employers were interviewed about their experiences with low-skilled and welfare-to-work employees and job applicants. During the course of the interviews, area employers expressed increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining entry-level employees. As reported in the Labor Market Study (July 31, 2000), interviews with San Mateo County employers revealed that these employers found that recently hired entry-level workers have low levels of basic skills and work/life skills. Employers are willing to hire applicants with deficits in the former, but will not hire those with deficits in the latter. Many suggested that the County could perform a valuable service to the business community by better preparing applicants in both basic and work/life skills.

The Labor Market Study also outlined three suggested strategies for planning a career matched to CalWORKs clients' abilities and interests:

- 1) **Advancement on the job:** Remain with one employer where there is a clear path to advancement. This requires a moderate level of initiative, and is a strategy best suited to a client who does not have the ability or interest in continuing education or changing employers.
- 2) **Advancement by changing employers:** Change employers after getting experience on the job. This strategy requires more initiative than the first, but does not require additional education, and is suited for clients who would be able to manage a job search while working.
- 3) **Advancement by pursuing education:** Obtain additional education and advance with current employer or change employers. This strategy requires a great deal of initiative on the part of the client, and should be recommended for those who express interest in continuing classroom education.

In this report, we sought to identify the job training activities that would be most likely to improve matches of current and former CalWORKs recipients to existing jobs with the potential for advancement, as well as enhancing retention and advancement in these career ladders. We also evaluate the availability of such training programs in San Mateo County. Section 2 reveals crosscutting themes concerning training needs that were culled from interviews with employers. Section 3 discusses training needs with regards to the advancement strategy chosen by the employee. Section 4 describes examples of relevant training programs by career ladder, using the example career ladders from the Labor Market Study. Section 5 details the availability of work/life, basic, and occupational skills training programs, with an emphasis on the effectiveness of work/life skills classes currently provided by the County and mandatory for CalWORKs clients. Section 6 lists our recommendations for actions the County could take to improve job

retention and advancement among CalWORKs clients, including modifications and supplements to existing training programs available in the county. We supplement our recommendations with other relevant research findings where appropriate.

2. TRAINING THEMES COMMON ACROSS EMPLOYERS

Regardless of the industry or the occupations for which they hire, the 31 employers we interviewed identified a number of common qualities and skills that are not only critical for job success, but also have been lacking among recent entry-level job applicants. A detailed summary of employer responses to questions concerning training can be found in Appendix A. The following chapter discusses these qualities and describes the types of training employers recommend to increase job placement and success for entry-level workers.

Table 1 lists the types of training programs that employers reported as the most beneficial for entry-level employees. Table 2 names the skills and qualities that employers required for entry-level positions. Based on these analyses, employers identified four skills areas as those in which recent job applicants are in need of training.

- 1) ***Work/Life Skills.*** In a strong economy such as that in San Mateo County, work/life skills, often referred to as “soft skills”, are more important than formal training in obtaining low-skilled, entry-level work. Employers consistently mentioned the importance of employees having these work/life skills, and felt that they could train for the specific skills required on the job. However, employers lamented that many recent applicants for entry-level positions lack the underlying work/life skills that would enable them to learn the specific skills required for the job. For instance, employers stated employees must be punctual, have a good attitude, have strong communication skills, and possess the desire to learn what can be trained on the job. Without these skills, employers are unlikely to consider job applicants or will quickly weed out new hires who fail to exhibit them. While many employers do not require any formal education or training and others are relaxing their requirements for such training, there is a need for training programs and classes that address low-skilled applicants’ work/life skills. Recent literature examining labor market opportunities for welfare clients also supports this notion that employers view soft skills as more important than other, occupation-specific skills for entry-level work (Strawn and Martinson 2000).

Specifically, work/life skills include punctuality, daily attendance, presentation, work ethic, grammar and communication skills, and the ability to follow directions. For example, employers mention that applicants for entry-level positions are often not appropriately dressed at job fairs and interviews. Many also lack a well-prepared resume, which, regardless of the applicants’ skills, implies to the prospective employer that they are not serious about the position for which they apply. Some employers acknowledge that problems with attendance and tardiness sometimes result from unstable childcare arrangements and unreliable transportation, but also believe they are often due to a lack of experience and familiarity with the world of work.

Work/life skills are required by all employers, and they are not willing to train in these areas. Successful applicants will already possess these skills. Thus, the lack of work/life skills among those leaving welfare and other low-skilled employees poses a challenge to

San Mateo County, especially if and when the economy slows and employers are able to increase the requirements for low-skilled positions.

- 2) ***Customer service skills.*** Customer service skills include communication skills and the ability to deal with clients, co-workers, and supervisors in a professional and productive way. Even where the positions in question were not client-based, employers noted that employees must use customer service skills, with their supervisor in the role of “customer”. A poor attitude can lead to conflict with customers or co-workers, which will at best eliminate the employee’s chance of advancement and at worst result in termination. Employers are willing to train customer service skills to some extent, but assert that employees must be pre-disposed to working with others in order to excel in these positions. In addition, many employers identify exceptional customer service skills as a key factor leading to promotion, especially to management-level positions in service industries.
- 3) ***Computer skills.*** For the entry-level positions included in our study, employers stated that applicants must have familiarity with the keyboard and typing, mouse, email, internet, word processing, and, less frequently, specific software applications. We found it is important that job applicants have familiarity—not necessarily expertise—with computers. Applicants should anticipate using computers during the application process even for positions that do not require the use of a computer. Many screening examinations are done on computers, and some retail store managers ask applicants to complete applications at a computerized kiosk in the store. Many employers also noted that more of their entry-level jobs will require the use of computers in some capacity in the near future.
- 4) ***English as a Second Language (ESL) skills.*** Some entry-level positions do not require English ability. However, there is almost no opportunity for advancement for employees who do not learn to speak some English. At a minimum, employees should acquire verbal English skills; however, employees who learn to read and write in English as well have far greater opportunities for higher pay and job advancement.

The four skills areas listed above were those listed as the most important skills for entry-level job applicants to possess in order to obtain and retain work. They were also mentioned as the areas in which applicants are most in need of further instruction and training. The following chapter discusses the role of specific types of training in our three typologies for advancement.

Table 1. Skills and Qualities Required for Entry-Level Positions by San Mateo County Employers

Category	Skills and Qualities Desired	# of Employers
Work/Life Skills	Customer Service Ability	15
	Work Ethic	10
	Ability to Follow Directions	6
	Team Orientation	4
	Detail-Orientation	3
	Flexibility (work hours)	2
	Reliability	2
Basic Skills	English Speaking	15
	English Reading and Writing	14
	High School/GED	8
	Math	3
Certification Programs	Driver's License	2
	C.N.A.	1
	Phlebotomist Certification	1
Other	Computer Skills	9
	Cash Handling Skills	3
	Strength	3
	Typing Ability	2
	Bilingual Speaking Ability	2
	Retail Experience	2
	Food Preparation Experience	1

Table 2. Training Programs Requested by San Mateo County Employers

Category	Training Desired	# of Employers
Work/Life Skills	Work/Life Skills	10
	Customer Service Skills	6
	Communication Skills	2
	Conflict Resolution Training	1
	Diversity Training	1
Basic Skills	English as a Second Language (ESL)	5
Certification Programs	Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	1
	Phlebotomist	1
Other	Computer Skills Training	6
	Cashiering/Cash Handling	2
	Supervisory Training	2
	County-Employer Partnerships	1
	Bank Teller	1

3. THE ROLE OF TRAINING IN STRATEGIES FOR JOB ADVANCEMENT

In the Labor Market Study, we detailed three primary strategies for job advancement from entry-level positions. In this chapter, we will review these strategies and discuss the types of training programs that are most useful in advancing with each respective strategy.

Strategy 1. *Advancement on the job: Remain with one employer where there is a clear path to advancement.* This requires a moderate level of initiative, and is a strategy best suited to a client who does not have the ability or interest in continuing education or in changing employers. Clients can obtain the skills they need before or while entering the workforce through relevant training courses.

Jobs in this category have a clearly defined progression from entry-level jobs to more advanced positions that provide higher wages and increased job responsibility. Often, a union process that rewards tenure and punishes poor performance creates the career progression in this category. Employees that remain on the job, perform their tasks well, participate in employer-provided on-the-job training, and indicate a desire to advance will generally be able to do so. Even when unionization is responsible for guiding the advancement process, employees must let supervisors know they wish to advance in order to be considered for openings. Employees should take the initiative to ask for the chance to learn, take on more responsibilities, and be promoted, even if the supervisor does not spell out the terms by which to do so. Some examples of entry-level jobs in this category include loader/unloader, baggage handler, bank teller, courtesy clerk, line assembler, and clerical positions (in education). It is important that clients and caseworkers understand that these jobs are relatively rare, and still do require employees to exhibit initiative on the job. Advancing within the company may require changing locations.

Relevant training programs. As mentioned above, this advancement strategy is suited for those who are not interested in extensive education and training outside of work. However, employees using this strategy must know how to stand out as a good employee and actively seek out advancement opportunities. For this reason, classes that advocate self-initiative and good communication skills may be helpful to these employees. Because keeping a job is the most important step in advancing on that job, employees will benefit from the work/life skills training mentioned in the previous section. Similarly, a lack of English communication skills may be a barrier to advancement on some jobs. In addition, some employers recommended supervisory training for entry-level employees who wish to advance into management.

Strategy 2. *Advancement by changing employers: Change employers after getting experience on the job.* This strategy requires more initiative, but does not require additional education. Most of the training should be obtained before entering the workforce. This strategy is best suited for clients who would be able to manage a job search while working. Studies show that remaining with a single employer can result in stagnant wages. Evidence shows that even a lateral move to another employer can lead to higher pay (Strawn and Martinson 2000).

Clients with particularly low levels of skill or work experience may find this to be the fastest way to advance. While clients with little or no work experience will not have difficulty finding jobs, the pay they are offered will reflect their lack of skill and experience. Our research suggested that these clients might advance more quickly by moving to similar employers rather than remaining with their initial employer. Making a lateral move into the same job in the same industry but with a different company may result in higher pay. This strategy may work best in retail sales, food service, and hospitality. Clients should plan to continue job search activities while working, and should use their network of friends and co-workers to learn of opportunities with other employers.

Relevant training programs. Employees utilizing this advancement strategy must have excellent organizational skills, a great deal of initiative, networking and job search skills, and must know how to “sell” the experience they obtain in past jobs to potential new employers. Finally, in order to be considered for a new job, potential employees must display strong work/life skills. Training programs that provide work/life skills and communication skills would be most beneficial to these clients, although training in basic skills such as literacy and English may be useful as well.

Strategy 3. *Advancement by pursuing education or training: Obtain additional education and advance with current employer or change employers.* This strategy requires a great deal of initiative on the part of a client, and should be recommended for those who express interest in continuing classroom-style education after entering the workforce.

Obtaining further training or education increases an employee’s range of opportunities for advancement tremendously, but this strategy often requires a great deal of initiative and investment of time outside work hours. Some employers offer free education or training at the work site, but this is rare. The two hotels in our survey offered English instruction to employees on site but only one continues to do so. A second option is to pursue education independently while working. CalWORKs clients considering this option should target employers who offer training or tuition reimbursement. Health care, business service, and private education employers often provide tuition reimbursement for courses related to employment within the institution.

Relevant training programs. Nearly all the more specialized training programs listed in Table 2 would be useful to the employee using this advancement strategy, depending on the employee’s occupation and industry. Clearly, health care-related training and computer applications are important to advance in two career ladders with exceptional promise (health care and administrative/clerical work). In addition, some jobs do require a GED. However, for employees who must work and attend classes, those programs which offer evening and weekend classes are the most convenient. If the employee wants to attend a full-time program, such as those that lead to an Associate’s Degree, it may be helpful to first seek employment in a company that will provide tuition reimbursement.

4. CAREER LADDER EXAMPLES AND RELEVANT TRAINING PROGRAMS

In the Labor Market Study, we provided examples of career ladders for entry-level employees with low levels of formal education. In this chapter, we will examine the relevant training programs for each of these sample career ladders. The career ladder examples are ordered in increasing degrees of education and training required for advancement.

STRATEGY 1: ADVANCEMENT ON THE JOB

Hospitality: Hospitality/Cleaning→Other Hospitality Occupations
Relevant Trainings: ESL, Hospitality-based customer service.

The hospitality industry is a great starting point for people with limited English skills. Those with low English skills are often qualified for entry-level work in hospitality, where many employers offer on-site instruction in English. The employee can then work within the industry/company or move into another industry with the newly acquired language skills.

Promotion is also possible within the hospitality industry. An employer at a local hotel makes a concerted effort to develop a career plan with employees, in addition to offering English language classes on-site. Employees can take advantage of this flexibility to obtain the skills and experiences they want, and can either use them at the hotel or apply them at another position at another company (strategy 2). For clients who want to make a career in the hospitality industry, hospitality-focused customer service training may be beneficial.

Banks: Teller 1 → Teller 2 → Teller Supervisor
Relevant Trainings: Teller, computers, customer service.

The banks participating in the study offered clear paths for internal advancement. Tellers are typically promoted yearly, and can become supervisors, who are salaried employees, within 3 years. Changing branches may be required. Employers are interested in promoting employees who seek a career in the banking industry, and will work with them to ensure that they get the skills they need. Participating employers reported that some current managers had been promoted from tellers, and one was a former welfare client. It is important to note that with the increase in online banking and ATMs, the number of teller positions is expected to decrease; however, participating employers report high demand for tellers because of turnover.

Employers in this industry reported that teller-training programs are very valuable. They also note that some training in computers is helpful, as many banking functions are now automated. Customer service skills are the most important factor leading to advancement, and employees looking to advance in the banking industry should take advantage of training programs that help them to excel in this area.

Transportation and Shipping: Loader → PT Supervisor → FT Supervisor
Cabin Cleaning → Ramp → Baggage Handling
Relevant Trainings: ESL, computer familiarity.

The employers interviewed in the transportation and shipping industries offered their employees clear paths to advancement. A union process largely controls promotion. Progression to higher paying wages is based on tenure and merit in these employers, and internal promotion is a big priority. One employer attempts to promote at least 4 employees internally for every one hired externally. It may be necessary to change locations in order to advance, but advancement can occur relatively quickly after employment begins.

Additional training is not necessary for those with English language ability and computer familiarity. Of course, having strong work/life skills is crucial to obtaining and retaining employment, and is necessary to advance.

STRATEGY 2: ADVANCEMENT BY CHANGING EMPLOYERS

Retail Sales: Low-End Retail→Higher End Retail
Hospitality/Cleaning→Low End Retail→Higher End Retail
Relevant Trainings: Retail sales, communication.

Low-end retailers have few prerequisites for employment as a salesperson, which explains the low rate of pay. Those new to the workforce can learn cashiering and customer service skills with these employers. They could then move on to higher-paying positions with other employers that require more experience. Cashiers and salespersons with prior cashiering experience earn up to \$18 per hour at one large employer interviewed. Those with retail experience can move into commissioned positions or more clerical, behind-the-scenes work, if they do not enjoy working with the public. Promotion to management positions is also possible. Employees starting in hotel services (such as hospitality and cleaning) with limited English may find that they could improve their pay by moving into retail sales after acquiring the necessary language skills.

Employers noted that they provide cash register training specific to their stores, but that the ability to use a register, work with money, and deal effectively with customers is highly sought after in an employee. Employers also note that while a brief training course (2-3 weeks) in retail sales would be effective, longer programs are unnecessary. Many employers said they would rather hire an applicant who has worked for one year in retail than one who has participated in a yearlong retail-training program.

Food Service: Prep Cook→ Chef
Relevant Trainings: Culinary arts, supervisory skills, communication skills.

Those interested in food service should look for positions in which they learn skills related to cooking, such as knife handling and understanding recipes. Employers in this industry were clear that advancement in a restaurant or cafeteria¹ requires knowledge of the recipes and

¹ This does not pertain to fast food restaurants.

cooking methods used. There are not many opportunities for cashiers to advance. Once the employee gains skills as a cook or chef, these skills can be transferred to other restaurants.

Fast food restaurants offer varied opportunities for advancement. One chain claims that 99% of managers began as team members. Other chains are not as eager to promote from within. A drawback to a career in this industry is that pay does not increase rapidly until the employee is promoted to manager and becomes salaried.

Clients who are interested in a career in restaurants should pursue culinary arts training programs. For those who are interested in a career in fast food or restaurant management, the most important training a client can receive is in communication and supervisory skills, as these are the most important skills for promotion to management positions.

STRATEGY 3: ADVANCEMENT BY PURSUING EDUCATION

Education: **Teacher's Aides → CDC Teacher**
 Teacher's Aides → Administrative Work

Relevant Trainings: **Early Childhood Education**

As these positions are unionized, pay and benefits are better and promotion is clearly delineated. Employers reported that this entry-level position is excellent for single mothers moving into the workforce -- especially if they enjoy working with children -- because it gives them confidence in their ability to work outside the home. Employers also note that this position is especially suitable to bilingual Spanish speakers given the large Latino community in San Mateo County.

With some further training and credentials in Early Childhood Education, which the employer may pay for, Teacher's Aides can move into other teaching positions, such as childcare instructors. Another option for advancement is into administrative positions at the schools, which pay an average of \$11.00 per hour for new employees. However there are rarely vacancies in these positions. Employees wishing to move through this career path should be, in the words of one employer, "alert, aggressive, and in the know" about available opportunities.

Business Services: **Entry-level Administrative Work → Advanced Administrative Work**
Relevant Trainings: **GED, computer, clerical/office, communication.**

Administrative positions require extensive computer and communication skills that few CalWORKs clients are likely to possess. However, for ambitious and willing clients, administrative jobs provide employees with the opportunity to acquire many marketable skills, such as the use of computer software applications, general office procedures, and business communication skills. In addition, many business services firms provide tuition reimbursement, so employees can obtain subsidized training that is useful preparation for other positions. There is often little potential for administrative assistants to advance in title within a firm, but the opportunity to acquire further education and computer skills is likely to increase pay.

Many employers require a GED for administrative positions. Applicants with few skills should begin with a training program in clerical and office skills, as most employers expect basic office

skills and will not provide extensive training. Interested clients may also want to take advantage of basic computer skills classes and perhaps classes that provide instruction in specific computer software packages. Finally, for positions where telephone communication or interaction with the public is common, a class in business communication may be helpful.

Health Care: Phlebotomist→Other Medical Professions
Relevant Trainings: LVN, RN, Supervisory training.

One employer in San Mateo County reported that certification is no longer required to become a phlebotomist, opening the opportunity for those with no health care training to enter the field through this occupation. While hospitals require certification and pay more, opportunities without certification may be available at blood donation centers and other health organizations.

This position can expose the employee to other health care occupations that require more education. Other entry-level positions include medical records, medical assistant, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and C.N.A., but each of these requires certification. Some employers in health care professions reported paying for additional training and/or providing tuition reimbursement for relevant training and classes. The next step in advancement might be to a technician position, which requires certification that takes a few months (e.g. surgical technician or central services technician). Alternately, employees could take advantage of tuition reimbursement and obtain certification as LVNs or RNs, although this requires at least one year of full-time training and could be hard to manage while working. Employers also suggested supervisory training would improve the employee's chance of promotion, as positions of more responsibility in a health care setting often require management skills.

5. ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE TRAINING PROGRAMS

In the Labor Market Study and in prior sections of this report, we have outlined the requirements for entry-level positions given by area employers and discussed relevant training programs that provide instruction in these skill areas. In this chapter, we provide a brief overview of the training courses available in San Mateo County and assess the degree to which the training matches the needs of employers culled from our interviews.

In Section A, we describe the curriculum of the STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes, the work/life skills classes required of CalWORKs recipients. In section B, we review the degree to which the courses mesh with the training needs for entry-level workers stated by employers we interviewed in the Labor Market Study. Section C describes the relevance of the STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes to the advancement strategies outlined in the Labor Market Study. Finally, section D reviews the availability of other occupational training programs in the County, particularly those occupations most mentioned by employers and those that we highlighted as important to advancement strategies.

5A. STEPS and JOB\$ NOW Curriculum and Instruction

San Mateo County's approach to service delivery to welfare clients has taken the form of the one-stop center, or the co-location of social service delivery agencies in one location. Welfare clients see caseworkers, participate in training programs, and perform job search from one location. The County has three one-stop centers – Daly City, Menlo Park, and San Carlos – and a satellite center in Redwood City. The primary training component of this new approach is a series of work/life skills classes, called the STEPS program (JOB\$ NOW at the Menlo Park location). STEPS and JOB\$ NOW are a modified version of the job club model created by Curtis and Associates. With some exceptions, all CalWORKs clients are required to participate in this 5-day series of workshops, though the classes are available to any county resident. The principal purpose of the courses is to help enable clients to move from welfare to work using job search and life skills. The Curtis Program is based on five primary concepts:

- 1) **Urgency.** Clients are strongly encouraged to find work now, as opposed to after completion of a training program. The combination of work experience and skills training benefits the client by illustrating the link between the two components.
- 2) **Ownership.** One employment specialist noted that before the STEPS classes, clients often depended on caseworkers to find jobs for them. When they experienced difficulties on the job, they were dependent on the caseworker to solve the problems and thus ill equipped to succeed on their own. STEPS/JOB\$ NOW encourages clients to determine their own goals and means to attain them, giving them more ownership over their progress.
- 3) **Learning by doing.** The philosophy of the Curtis Program holds that trainees retain more of the information they learn in basic and work/life skills training when these classes are combined with work experience or other job training, because clients are actively involved in applying what they learn and see the link between basic skills and

job performance. Clients actively participate in the training provided by STEPS/JOB\$ NOW, doing mock interviews and job searches.

- 4) **Lifelong learning.** Clients are urged to set life and career goals and continue pursuing these goals through education and skills upgrading. The skills taught in the class are presented as tools that can be used in all areas of life.
- 5) **Motivation.** The program emphasizes the need for clients to be motivated to reach their personal and employment goals. The program acknowledges that many clients have experienced difficulties in entering the workforce and must be motivated to overcome barriers to work.

The programs differ in structure depending on the location. The STEPS classes are offered all day for five consecutive days. Each day consists of two workshops. The JOB\$ NOW program, held in Menlo Park, is held for one-half day for five consecutive days, though it covers the same material. Clients at JOB\$ NOW perform job search in the Network Center in the afternoons to fulfill their requirements for CalWORKs. The series of classes involves five days of workshops covering interview skills, resume building and applications, identifying job considerations, job search skills, advancement strategies, conflict resolution, and budgeting. Participants also spend time in the Network Center, where resources such as computers with Internet access, telephones, phone books, job listings, and typewriters are available for their job search. There is also a group of professional vocational counselors, trainers, and caseworkers to help clients obtain skills and find work.

5B. Relevance of Courses to Labor Market Training Needs

Both STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes provide instruction in three of the four skills areas mentioned most often by employers as lacking in recent entry-level job applicants: work/life skills; such as attendance, punctuality, self-presentation, interview, and job search skills; customer service skills; and computer skills. The fourth skill area, English speaking and reading, is not addressed in either STEPS or JOB\$ NOW. The following section describes the skills taught in more detail:

- 1) **Attendance and Punctuality.** Employers often mentioned problems with poor attendance and a lack of punctuality among entry-level employees. STEPS and JOB\$ NOW attempt to simulate the conditions of work by requiring clients to attend the classes daily and on time. However, the Curtis program materials suggest that clients need only call if they will be 15 minutes or more late. Based on our discussions with employers, we feel that the course material should establish the expectation that clients will not be late. In fact, employers explicitly stated that employees should be at work ready to start at the time that their shift begins. Arriving even just one minute after a shift begins is considered late. According to the course rules, only absences with a doctor's note are excused. However, clients were very frequently late or absent for the workshops we observed, and there were no apparent consequences. Trainers do remind clients that employers will not tolerate absence and tardiness. They ask why the client was late, and attempt to work with them to avoid such mistakes in the future. While trainers emphasized the importance of punctuality and attendance, implementing some

consequences for failure to attend the classes on time may be more effective in instilling these practices among clients. Similarly, we would suggest that more care be taken to ensure that trainers be more conscientious about their own attendance and punctuality. Trainers were not always on time to the classes we observed, and, in one case, gave an excuse for being tardy that employers would find unacceptable. Given the importance that employers place on punctuality for entry-level employees, it is crucial that STEPS and JOB\$ NOW teach punctuality both through instruction and by way of example.

- 2) **Self-Presentation.** Students are taught self-presentation in two ways: (1) through self-confidence enhancing exercises and (2) through emphasis on the importance of a professional physical appearance to obtaining work. First, trainers encouraged clients to examine and summarize their accomplishments in order to present them in a positive way to potential employers in interviews. The workshops used a variety of exercises to help clients brainstorm their list of skills and accomplishments. Many clients had extensive life experience outside of work, in areas such as child rearing and budgeting, yet did not view these skills as relevant to employment. It appeared that many clients left these workshops more confident in their achievements and capabilities and how they pertain to work. Second, clients were instructed in appropriate physical presentation, including dress, hygiene, posture, expression, and handshake. Videotaped mock interviews revealed that many clients did not have much experience with interviewing, and were not prepared to present themselves in a professional manner. Trainers thoroughly reviewed the interview process, including tips on how to deal with tough questions. Clients who were in need of proper interview attire were given the opportunity to select an outfit free of charge from the one-stop centers' clothes closet

The workshops dealing with presentation and interview tips seemed to be the most useful to clients. Trainers reported that clients often mention that they have never thought about many of the issues covered in these classes. It was clear that most clients made significant progress in self-presentation as a result of the one-week course.

- 3) **Communication Skills.** Clients are taught communication skills for dealing with co-workers and employers. When discussing the application process, clients are given instruction on proper communication with employers in the interview and on the telephone. Also, clients learn how to effectively deal with problem co-workers in a professional and productive way.
- 4) **Computer Familiarity.** The workshops do not explicitly address computer skills. However, participants do gain or improve computer familiarity in their required job search, some of which is done on computers. Clients are encouraged to use the CalJOBS website to perform their job search. In addition, clients use computers to complete a resume and to compose cover letters and thank-you letters to employers. Through these activities, clients learn relevant word processing, typing, and mouse use. A counselor is available to assist clients in the use of the computers at all times. These skills may be adequate for many of the employers who stated that entry-level job candidates should have some degree of familiarity with computer use. More advanced knowledge of application software would require additional coursework.

- 5) **Resume and Application Process.** Clients are instructed in the workings of the application process. First, clients are taught the proper way to fill out job applications and compose resumes. Illustrative good and bad examples of resumes and job applications are provided to clients. As a part of the class, clients are required to write their own resumes, which are then reviewed by staff. Clients are taught how to find job openings in the “hidden” job market. Strategies include inquiring about job openings in stores and companies in their neighborhoods and using the phone book to find companies that appeal to them. They are taught the proper way to approach the manager to inquire about job openings. Each client must bring in one job lead per day, to illustrate that they are indeed looking for job openings. Trainers monitor clients to see whether or not they bring in one job lead daily, though there are no consequences for those who do not. Clients often memorize positive answers to difficult interview questions. In fact, one employer noted that graduates of the Curtis program often appear to be over-rehearsed or scripted during their job application. Indeed, the classes offer specific formulas for responding to certain situations. In our experience observing the classes, we came to believe that many clients needed this level of specificity in order to function in some work situations when first entering the workforce.

5C. Course Relevance to Advancement Strategies

For most new labor market entrants, learning to remain employed and advance on the job is as critical to becoming economically self-sufficient as obtaining the job in the first place. As many clients will no longer have contact with County trainers and caseworkers after they are no longer eligible for benefits, it is important that mandatory classes for welfare clients include instruction on how to advance in pay, benefits, and responsibilities. The following section will discuss the effectiveness of CalWORKs mandatory classes in teaching job retention and advancement strategies to clients.

- 1) **Long-Range Planning.** It is inevitable that some CalWORKs clients will enter the job market into very low-paying jobs with few benefits. CalWORKs clients need to see such jobs as a first step to economic independence, or as an opportunity to obtain the skills and experience to advance to work that pays more and is more satisfying. Clients must focus on their occupational goals and determine ways in which they can attain these goals through planning, work experience, and/or training.

The STEPS and JOBS NOW classes provide some instruction in long-range planning for both careers and finances. Clients perform exercises where they are asked to articulate their goals and specify the steps it will take to achieve them. Clients also learn how to budget their money in order to save for large expenses, such as a car or a housing needs, and emergencies. The purchase of a reliable car may be important to job retention and advancement – the client will be able to get to work more easily and reliably, and may be able to change locations if a better position opens that requires a commute. Thirteen percent of employed former recipients missed some work in the previous month due to problems with transportation (Wood and Paulsell 1999). However, long-range planning is only mentioned in two of the workshops. It is important to emphasize often that only

with planning and improved work skills would clients be able to move into fulfilling and well-paying work.

- 2) **Initiative.** Especially in service sector jobs, where most welfare clients are likely to work, initiative is key to job advancement. Beyond doing a good job, employees must actively seek out opportunities for training and advancement. For clients who are not used to working, it may not be obvious that it is necessary to go “beyond the call of duty” in order to advance on the job. For this reason, it is critical that STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes emphasize this.

The workshops emphasize initiative in many ways. Clients are often prompted to participate actively in the workshops, and are encouraged to ask and answer questions assertively. Several exercises are done that illustrate and reward initiative. During the workshops dealing with job advancement, clients review the steps to obtaining a raise and are instructed to carry a small pamphlet with several steps to job advancement.

However, we feel that explicitly mentioning initiative as the key to advancement not only through negotiating pay raises and promotions, but also as the key to seeking out other job opportunities with different employers once working and to getting additional training and education will help CalWORKS clients advance their careers. In fact, it seemed that students might be getting the message that they should not actively seek out opportunities for advancement for fear of seeming too aggressive. When asked “What do you hope to be doing five years from now?” by a prospective employer, students are instructed to reply “Working for you in a position of responsibility.” We believe the appropriate response to this question is to find out what other positions in the firm might exist and how one would advance to them. While the workshops emphasize the importance of initiative in job advancement, it was repeated so often by participating employers that we feel it could be stressed further.

- 3) **Other Training Programs.** The STEPS classes strongly emphasized the transition to work and thus rarely mentioned other training programs. Vocational counselors are available to assist clients in determining their need for further training, and there are binders available with training program directories and pamphlets with information about programs offered by high schools and colleges. However, without an explicit discussion of other training programs and how they might lead to a productive career, it is hard to imagine that clients would understand their potential importance in helping them advance. Research suggests that work/life skills classes are most effective at increasing earnings and employment when combined with work experience or other occupational training programs. In fact, adults who participate in basic or work/life skills training programs without corresponding occupation training or work experience are no more likely to be employed or to earn more than adults who do not participate in any training programs at all. (Trutko et al 2000).

5D. Occupational Training Programs

The previous section described the training/job search classes required of CalWORKs recipients. In this section, we provide a brief overview of the occupational training programs described as useful or desired by county employers. We specifically discuss basic skills as well as a few more advanced training programs necessary for career advancement in some occupations: Administrative Assistant training, Early Childhood Education training, and training in the health care professions. Here, we attempt to describe not only the availability of each, but also whether or not the training programs meet the training needs employers mentioned and teach the skill sets employers desire. These descriptions include a simple accounting of the available programs and the results of informal discussions with case managers, counselors, and trainers. Unlike the previous section, we do not go into detail about the content of each program offered by various providers. Many of the programs we describe culminate in certificates or in sitting for a licensing exam.

Table 3 summarizes the public and private training programs available in San Mateo County, including classes offered and their schedules. Only programs that offer classes in industries and occupations included in the Labor Market Study or that were mentioned by employers are included in this table, but there are many more training programs offered in the County.

Basic Skills. English as a Second Language (ESL), General Equivalency Diploma (GED), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and basic computer classes are the most accessible because they are offered frequently, on many schedules and at many locations. Table 3 illustrates that more than 10 computer software and ESL courses are offered both in the day or evening, and that both have weekend offerings as well. Computer Basics are in somewhat shorter supply, with 2 to 5 classes taught in the day time, 6 to 9 courses taught at night, and only one offered on the weekend. There did not appear to be any weekend classes in either basic skills or for the GED. All ABE, GED, and ESL classes are offered free of charge and are often located at high schools, community centers, and community colleges. There is typically a charge for computer classes, ranging from \$11/unit at community colleges, to \$250 per one-day session at some private computer training companies, and to \$800 for a 36-week course. Many classes are available on weekdays, weekends, and evenings; thus, clients should be able to find classes to meet their work schedules and family obligations. ROP's Computerized Office Careers course, geared toward computer novices, sounds especially helpful. Skills taught include turning the computer on and off, using a mouse, keyboarding skills, and introductory use of software applications such as Word and Excel. Students also learn filing techniques and basic telephone communication skills. The course is offered at a variety of times and places.

Clerical/Administrative Assistant. Clerical and administrative assistant training programs are quite plentiful throughout the county, and are available at low-cost, although there is a wide range in price depending on the training provider. Course offerings range from a sequence of semester long courses offered through community colleges which result in an Administrative Assistant Certificate to much shorter topic-area classes. The Administrative Assistant Certificate requires at least two semesters of full-time coursework to complete. Courses include basic keyboarding skills, word processing, spreadsheet applications, interpersonal communication, business English, and business communication. Another trainer, Jefferson Adult School, offers a

half-day 36-week long course in Office Technology, but this costs as much as \$800. Topic areas are similar to those covered by the community college program, and include receptionist skills, keyboarding skills, computer applications, and office management skills. ROP offers Computer Applications for Business in a number of locations. It is expected that students in this course have already mastered the skills described in ROP's Computerized Office Careers course, and covered topic areas are similar to those of Jefferson Adult School's classes.

Early Childhood Education. Early Childhood Education (ECE) training is available at local community colleges. Table 3 shows that between six and nine courses are offered during the weekdays, weeknights, and weekends throughout the County. Employers either require a certification in ECE (approximately 6 courses) or a certain number of courses (4 in the case of one employer) to be considered eligible for positions as pre-school teachers. Given their relatively large availability and low cost, these courses are in principle accessible to CalWORKs clients. However, most local community colleges are located closer to Highway 280 than Highway 101, where most CalWORKs clients are concentrated (see Labor Market Study), and thus some clients may face transportation barriers. All are accessible by SamTrans, and parking is inexpensive. Accumulating enough courses for a certificate would likely take more than one semester.

Health Care Professions. Specialized programs in the medical field, such as medical assistant, technician (EKG, phlebotomist, surgical, etc.), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Certified Nurse Assistant (C.N.A.), Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), and Registered Nurse (RN) are relatively rare despite very high demand for graduates from these programs. Many of these programs are offered less frequently and are often only offered as full-time courses of study during weekdays. For example, Table 3 shows that only the EMT course is offered during the weekends. C.N.A., LVN, and Surgical Technician classes are only offered during the weekdays. This makes it nearly impossible for CalWORKs clients to combine work and school. Some of those programs offered at night or on weekends (e.g. Central Services Technician and Medical Assistant) are offered by private training providers and are considerably more expensive (\$800 for night-time Medical Assistant training and \$600 for the night-time Central Services Technician class).

Students that complete a training program in the health care field are likely to find high-paying employment at graduation (starting at \$12 to \$14 an hour). Our interviews with employers generally concluded that employers prefer training courses that involve some degree of on the job training. Most programs involve an internship or short-term placement with an employer. These placements frequently result in a job offer for the student, but at least one private provider of Medical Assistant training offers no job placement services. However, the employer demand is so great, employers call the training providers to secure new hires, so job placement has not been difficult. Table 3 illustrates that these programs are in relatively short supply. One counselor/trainer believes there are not enough of these courses offered given the demand for the classes on the part of students and potential employers. Nearly all of the health care employers and trainers we spoke with confirmed that employers call trainers directly to attempt to meet their recruitment needs.

Table 3. Availability of Training Programs in San Mateo County

Training Program	Day Classes	Evening Classes	Weekend Classes
	-	-	-
Work/Life Skills	-	-	-
STEPS Classes	2-5	-	-
JOB\$ NOW	1	-	-
Job Skills	-	2-5	-
Basic Skills			
Computer Software	10+	10+	2-5
English as a Second Language (ESL)	10+	10+	1
Computer Basics	2-5	6-9	1
Basic Skills (Reading, Math)	6-9	2-5	-
General Equivalency Diploma (GED)	2-5	5	-
Certification Programs			
Medical Assistant	1	2-5	-
General Health Professions	-	2-5	-
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	1	-	1
Phlebotomist	-	1	-
Home Health Aide	-	1	-
EKG Technician	-	2-5	-
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	2-5	-	-
Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)	1	-	-
Surgical Technician	1	-	-
Central Services Technician	-	1	-
Culinary Arts	1	-	-
Early Childhood Education	6-9	6-9	6-9
Bank Teller	-	-	-
Other			
Communication	-	1	-
Internet	6-9	2-5	-
Clerical	10+	2-5	2-5
Keyboarding	2-5	2-5	-
Retail	-	1	-
Customer Service	-	1	-
Travel and Hospitality	2-5	-	-

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS

We conclude this report by summarizing our key findings regarding the skills and training needs identified by San Mateo County employers for low-skilled workers and the implications for program changes. We categorize these recommendations according to their relevance for the STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes, courses related to basic skills, and courses related to specific occupations, and rank the recommendations within each category.

Recommendations for STEPS/JOB\$ NOW Classes

1. ***Courses could be more closely aligned with the demands of the workplace, and have real and enforced consequences of increasing severity for not meeting performance expectations.*** County employers emphasized repeatedly that work/life skills were crucial to securing, retaining, and advancing on a job. While the STEPS/JOB\$ NOW classes address key issues such as punctuality, professional appearance, and communication with supervisors and co-workers, more could be done to reinforce these skills. For example, clients are often allowed to attend classes despite being late and are not required to demonstrate having completed their assignments from the previous day. In a workplace setting, performance issues would result in consequences with increasing severity and the program might want to replicate this type of process. Other research has also suggested that training must mimic the expectations of the workplace in order to be most effective (Strawn and Martinson 2000).
2. ***Courses could incorporate training on the role of initiative in job advancement for each of the three strategies (on the current job, in changing employers, and in pursuing additional education).*** Discussions about job advancement should be more explicit regarding the role of worker initiative in moving up on the job, either by changing employers or by obtaining additional training. Students should not be made to feel that discussing the route to advancement with employers will be perceived as aggressive. Other research has confirmed the need for assistance with job advancement as most former welfare clients find themselves either continuing in low-paying jobs or without work within a short time of finding their initial job (Wood and Paulsell 1999).
3. ***Courses could provide information about how to pursue more advanced training while working, which would help clients plan more effectively for advancement in careers requiring certification or additional education.*** The potential benefit of additional training programs to career advancement, as well as how to find out about such training programs, could also be a component of these required classes.
4. ***More role-playing in customer service and communication skills may help clients to deal with conflict on the job.*** Given the limited work experience of CalWORKs clients and the more readily available jobs in industries that involve customer service, many current employees and job seekers are in need of improved communication and people skills in order to face the challenges of client- or customer-based work. These are addressed in STEPS and JOB\$ NOW classes, but one week of training may be insufficient to fully address these deficits among people with limited work experience.

As described below, with regard to basic skills, many entry-level workers could benefit from similar classes offered at the place of employment.

5. ***Including more mock interviewing in the courses (with actual employers) would better prepare clients for actual job interviews. Ideally, these mock interviews would require “applicants” to display initiative and a desire for advancement.*** As strong communication skills and initiative are two critical factors in job advancement, clients need rehearsal in these areas that resembles real interviewing situations.

Basic Skills

1. ***Providing ESL courses at employer locations would bring English Language instruction to some of those most in need of and most able to benefit from increased English proficiency.*** Many employers cited English skills as those most lacking by recent applicants. Providing on-site ESL instruction would enable more limited-English proficient employees to participate in such classes. Some local employers with large populations of Spanish- and Chinese-speaking employees stated that they would welcome the opportunity to work with the County to provide English instruction to their employees on-site. One employer already providing ESL instruction on site before work hours found the class to be very popular among Spanish-speaking employees. Trutko et al (2000) find integrating training into the workday and in ways directly related to work experience is most effective for welfare clients.
2. ***Other basic skills courses (reading, writing, basic math, and computers) could also be welcome at employer sites.*** Many employers noted these skills were lacking, and both other research and anecdotal evidence suggest workers will not pursue these skills on their own once employed (Strawn and Martinson 2000). However, it is not yet known whether employees would take advantage of these basic skills classes if they were provided at their place of employment.

Occupational Training Programs

1. ***More health-related training programs are necessary, and more programs that hold classes in the evenings and weekends are essential for participants who are currently employed.*** The health professions nearly always require certification. However, many people entering the health professions, especially those leaving CalWORKs, must work full-time while attending class. Both the inventory of available training programs shown in Table 3 and our discussions with trainers and employers indicated that these courses are in relatively short supply. Employer demand will continue to be high, wages are high, and some training programs are relatively short. The County’s resources could be productively spent teaming with local training providers to offer more short-term weekend or weeknight training courses in the health care professions. It might also be effective to offer at least part of these programs at health care facilities that employ entry-level workers in order to maximize participation and integrate work experience into the training. (Strawn and Martinson 2000).

2. ***Further research could be done to investigate the possibility of leveraging work-study as a way to combine work and school while on CalWORKs.*** One counselor at a community college indicated that low-income students with work-study jobs on campus are more likely to complete their training programs than are students working off campus. This may be because community colleges generally offer the most comprehensive services, which often include subsidized childcare on-site, financial assistance with transportation, tuition, and books, as well as additional counseling. This research could also address how work-study might relate to CalWORKs work requirements.
3. ***Employers, trainers, and other researchers repeatedly noted the difficulty entry-level workers have in maintaining reliable childcare and means of transportation. This impacts the ability to complete training programs and retain jobs. There may be a role for the County to play in promoting and providing support services in these areas for those who have left CalWORKs.***

Rangarajan and Novak (1999) suggest that most former welfare clients would be most assisted by receiving assistance with childcare. For San Mateo County, this may mean just doing more to make clients aware of existing services. Research conducted in South Carolina found that more than half of those who left welfare were not aware that leaving welfare for work made them eligible for childcare assistance (South Carolina Department of Public Services 1997, cited in Brown et al 1998). Or it is possible that expanding the provision of childcare assistance to include emergency childcare when primary childcare methods fail would be a productive investment (Wood and Paulsell 1999). Emergency transportation assistance might also go far towards helping clients retain employment. These support services will help to ensure that the client can concentrate on learning while also working, and increases the chance that the client will complete training programs (Rangarajan 2000).

Investment in other forms of support services, especially continuing case management, does not appear to be valued by clients or particularly helpful in terms of job retention (Wood and Paulsell 1999) nor increase earnings or the chances of moving to self-sufficiency (Rangarajan and Novak 1999).

Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided

Position	Training Provided	Training Required	Training Desired
ER, Surgical, Central Services, OB, Radiology, Ultrasound , EKG, Lic. Phys Tech; Phlebotomist, Medical Asst., Med. Records Clerk, Clerical, CAN, LVN	6 months of training/probation that depends on the manager and skills of employee. Radiology training program, CPR, certification exams, and continuing education courses available.	HS or GED and 18 months-3 years training for some positions.	County-employer partnerships to sponsor full-time training/job programs; possible training program through ROP for medical professions.
CNA, LVN, RN, Paramedic, EMT	N/a	Certification required for all positions, takes from 2 days for EMTs and Paramedics to 18 months for LVNs.	Currently has no relationship with training providers; do not hire from nurse training programs.
Activity Aide → Activity Director, Dietary Aide → Cook → Dietary Supervisor, Housekeeping	36-hour training for Activity Director; similar for dietary supervisor; 12 areas of state-mandated trainings that occur 1 hour/week; 1-5 days of one-on-one training.	HS or GED preferred but not required.	ESL, CNA, ROP (all on-site), more training based in real experience.
Phlebotomist → LVN → RN	3-6 weeks OTJ training, 2-5 additional weeks OTJ training with a full-time trainer.	2-day training course in phlebotomy preferred, CA driver's license required.	Supervisory training, phlebotomist training.

Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided cont.

Position	Training Provided	Training Required	Training Desired
Yard Monitor, Bus Monitor, Food Service, Van Driver, Bus Driver, Custodian, Warehouse, Gardener, Campus Supervisor, Instructional Assistant, CDC Teacher.	Team Building; TAs get group training in child development.	HS, GED, or equivalent “life experience”; yard monitor requires no education.	none
Clerical Aide→Receptionist→ Attendance Clerk→Staff Secretary Substitute Custodian→Custodian	Orientation; informal OTJ training	HS or GED, type 40 wpm.	none
Bank teller 1—>Teller 2 →Teller Supervisor →Operations Super →Branch Manager Or Teller 2→Customer serv. Rep → Financial service rep→Branch mgr general clerical, entry clerical	2-week bank policy and procedures training, shadow other employees, BC-specific computer training.	none	ROP teller training is excellent. More PC training needed. Prefers internal training.
Bank Teller→ Personal Banker→ Teller Coordinator→Assistant Manager→ Manager	8-day classroom training in SJ or SF in which new employees learn everything about telling, then paired with a buddy until ready to work alone.	none	Basic computer and keyboard training, customer service, conflict resolution, basic job skills (resume building, dressing for work, etc.).
Medical Receptionist Medical Assistant	N/a	HS or GED. Medical Receptionist: Medical Assistant Certificate will demand higher wage. Medical Assistant: CNA or experience.	N/a

Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided cont.

Position	Training Provided	Training Required	Training Desired
Sales Associate →Floor Authorizer →Commissioned → Merchandise Associate	Verbal orientation, 16 hours register training, customer service; all on-site.	None	Not very interested in county training, but would like to see more applicants with good communication skills who are presentable.
Team Member →Area Coordinator →Team Leader →Store Manager	Orientation	None	Customer service, absences, tardiness, reliability.
Sales Support →Sales Associate →Sales Specialist →Commissioned	Orientation is mentor program to learn product and customer service; computer-based training.	none	Communication skills, attitude, working with others.
Associate →3 rd Key →Assistant Manager →Manager	2-day orientation on safety and paperwork; some informal district-wide orientation. OTJ training on register, inventory. 6-day management training program for those promoted to manager.	none	Does not think outside training would be helpful. Hired employees from 1-year cash handling/cashiering program and they did not work out. He'd prefer to see experience, or a 2-3 day program.
Salesperson	5-day orientation based on policies and either cashiering or special services; 13 week course before promotion (can be done in 8 weeks), all on-site.	none	Basic customer service skills, technology, cashiering, retail. Mixed feelings about OICW.

Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided cont.

Position	Training Provided	Training Required	Training Desired
Courtesy Clerks →General Merchandise Clerk →Checker	All on-site or by video, customer service and safety training. CC-4hr training, GMC-1day, Checker-1 week in job specifics.	none	Basic job skills (interview skills, presentation, grammar, grooming, punctuality).
Team Member →star employee → all-star employee →crew leader → shift supervisor → co-mgr →mgr	4-hour off-site orientation on policy, OTJ customer service training, 14 days of training in customer or food service.	none	ESL, customer service, cash register and money handling skills, job expectations, job preparation (resume, presentation).
Trainee → Barista →Shift Supervisor →Store manager	On-site instruction in how to do the job.	none	none
Front Desk Agent →Shift Supervisor →Front desk supervisor →front office mgr. Room Cleaner →supervisor → asst housekeeper → exec housekeeper	2-4 days of orientation on basics of hotel, safety, benefits, guest service. Front desk: 2-3 weeks OTJ training/mentorship with supers; Room cleaners: 3 hours classroom training and 3 hours OTJ with co-worker.	HS or GED	Customer service, computers, interpersonal communication, diversity, ESL. At least ESL should be on-site.
Teaching Assistant →teacher	Orientation program, will pay for ECE units-tuition and books. 1-week training for teachers that covers handling tantrums, communication, lesson planning, parental involvement, and CPR/1 st aid.	HS or GED, ECE units will increase pay, 12 are necessary to become a teacher.	No training desired.

Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided cont.

Position	Training Provided	Training Required	Training Desired
Assembler (stamp # on printing labels->large components->cutting and buffing->senior assembler->rework unit	Few days to a month of explaining task, performing task off the line, and then moving to the line with frequent supervision. Also supervisory skills and English on-site, and computers off-site.	None	Conversational English on-site, PC entry-level skills (mouse use, word processing, email, basic internet use) off-site.
Electronic Assembler	N/a	HS or GED	N/a
Customs Specialist I → II → III	Informal orientation, provide set of trainings in Core Competencies (20 hrs), company policy, and CLASS I computer training (8 hrs) internally, tuition reimbursements.	HS or GED	ROP Associate's Degree Program in International Transportation is valuable.
Loader →PT Supervisor → FT Supervisor → Driver	Orientation that covers paperwork and safety (how to lift and lower, use belts, heavy machinery), customer service, processing packages, production. Employee is given 30 days to reach capacity.	none	Life/work skills classes (promptness, attitude, body language) County should explain hard work required and benefits available.
Facilities, Administrative Assistants	Half of career development budget given to employees, half on quality control, negotiation, communication, management, presentation, team building, computer classes; local colleges and on-site training.	none	Computer skills

Appendix A. Summary of Employer Training Requirements and Training Provided cont.

Position	Training Provided	Training Required	Training Desired
Greenhouse worker → Key worker → supervisor	Safety training.	none	Basic employment skills (promptness, following directions, asking questions, coming everyday). Transportation, job coaches.
Pre-Board Screener → CTX Operator → Supervisor → Duty Manager	2-day training in how to detect incendiary devices and hazardous materials, 40 hours OTJ training with a mentor/buddy.	HS or GED in English.	ESL, job readiness.
Floor staff → Lead Clerk → Asst. Mgr. → Mgr.	7-10 days formal training (3-6 hrs info desk, 5-8 hrs register, 5-8 hrs customer service), informal OTJ training.	none	Customer service.
Dishwasher, housekeeping, laundry, bus person, server, bell hop, front desk	Brief orientation, ESL 1x/week, cooperation, customer service. Taught by outside consultants.	None	None
Line server → prep cook → advanced prep cook → sous chef → café supervisor → café manager cashier	N/a	None	Have used Curtis and Delancey Street; employees hired were satisfactory. Would like to see more management training, more follow-up from trainers.

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