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Oral, Written Communication Skills in High Demand

Fort Wayne, IN – Oral and written communication are the top employability skills sought by northeast Indiana’s two largest employment sectors, according to a February Labor Market Report issued by Northeast Indiana Works.

The information on in-demand employability skills – also referred to as soft skills – is based on an Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) analysis of online job ads posted by the region’s manufacturing and health care/social assistance sectors in 2015.

Oral and written communication skills were far and away the priority among employers in both sectors in 2015. They have consistently been the most in-demand employability skills for at least the past two years.

In manufacturing, oral and written communication skills were mentioned in 1,243 online job ads in 2015, followed by Microsoft Office (651); problem solving (520); troubleshooting (355); and attention to detail (344). In health care/social assistance, oral and written communication skills were mentioned in 2,369 online job ads, followed by organizational skills (851); creativity (787); interpersonal skills (444); and attention to detail (437).

Across all industry sectors, oral and written communication skills were mentioned in 24 percent of online job ads in northeast Indiana.

Both manufacturing and health care are expected to grow in the next decade in northeast Indiana, according to projections derived from Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI). The greatest number of job gains are expected to be among team assemblers in manufacturing (1,158 jobs) and registered nurses in health care/social assistance (1,409).

Gary Gatman, executive vice president of strategic initiatives for Northeast Indiana Works, said the emphasis on oral and written communication underscores the need for such skill development to be integrated with all learning disciplines.

“Oral and written communication needs may vary from occupation to occupation,” Gatman said, “But what is clear is that attention to developing effective communication should be embraced by all education and training providers.”

About Northeast Indiana Works: Northeast Indiana Works, the region’s workforce development board, provides public and private financial and employment resources to businesses and individuals for education and skills training to meet the needs of regional industries. The nonprofit sets policy for how public and private funds are utilized to support talent development. It also operates and staffs the 11 county-based WorkOne Northeast career centers in the region. Individuals and companies may access resources and services by visiting or calling WorkOne in their county. To find your local WorkOne, log on to www.neinworks.org.