Case Study of Employer Skill Validation Efforts

Rationale

We understand that employers often rely on certificates or degrees to verify the acquisition of skills, but this may only cover a portion of the skill improvement activities in which employees may be engaged and this may not be an accurate reflection of the skills employees actually possess. We also understand that validating newly acquired skills is key to accurately identifying and providing opportunities to enhanced career pathways. And we realize that there are skill validation practices that some employers are using, but the methods for employers to validate these skills may not be well-established.

Focus

We are conducting research that has been funded by Walmart to lay the groundwork for understanding the landscape of skill validation practices; as well as any systems or tools being used specifically related to validating skills learned on the job. Additionally, we want to understand how organizations are implementing skills-based practices more generally across their human capital functions.

Specific Approach

We are conducting case studies with employers that are using skills-based approaches to validate the skills acquired by their workforce. We are also examining tools and systems that support skills validation and tracking.

If your organization was interested in participating, we would want to talk to those individuals directly involved with establishing/implementing the skill validation practices to learn:

- What best practices and innovations are being used related to skill validation and skills-based practices and how effective are they?
- What challenges have been faced in implementing the skill validation practices?
- What specific systems and tools (if any) are being used to help expedite the process?

We will then analyze this information to identify best practices and novel approaches to skill validation (including any specific tools or systems being used). And a report that summarizes the findings and recommendations from the study will be shared with the public, with the inclusion of the case studies of those employers willing to participate (or an aggregation of information from those willing to participate in the study, but not be explicitly listed in the report as a case study participant).

In return, we will share a high-level summary of the results with all case study participants at the end of this effort. For more information contact: Christina Curnow ccurnow@air.org or Rob Calderón rcalderon@air.org