



Access to skilled workers is one of the foremost criteria that companies and site selectors consider when locating and expanding business in Missouri. The ability to show companies an available and sustainable pipeline of skilled workers continues to be the difference in Missouri's ability to turn economic development assets into high quality job opportunities. To support these efforts the research arm of the Department of Economic Development, the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), has embarked on a project to bring together the appropriate state and local individuals to align education and workforce programs with the future talent development needs of companies.

Industry clusters defined as groups of interdependent businesses linked by core products or services as well as the potential for common supply chains, labor needs, technology and markets were identified. These are:

- Agribusiness
- Automotive
- Defense & Homeland Security
- Energy
- Finance
- Information Technology
- Life Sciences
- Transportation/Logistics

For each of these industry clusters Target Industry Competency Models will be developed with the help of target employers and education/training providers in the state.

The globalized marketplace along with the rapid development of technology has created a work environment where information and technology are the key ingredients for success in business. To reduce the gap between knowledge and ability there is a need for workers to have a better understanding of the skill sets needed for a job. By hiring properly trained individuals, organizations save money and spend less time preparing their staff in their work roles while colleges and universities have a better understanding towards curriculum development and maintenance ¹.

The Target Industry Competency Model project is intended to identify personal effectiveness, academic and occupation specific competencies for targeted businesses within the state's Life Sciences industry cluster. The objective of designing a Competency Model is to develop a dynamic, industry-driven framework necessary for workers that will help them meet the demands of the globally competitive economy. This is particularly useful in a high skilled field such as Life Sciences, where accurate knowledge of the current and future skill requirement can enable timely direction of resources, development and revision of industry-relevant curriculum and efficient development of career information and job profiles.

