

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 family supporting 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, technologies, 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 would be developed with the help of target employers and education/training providers in the state.

The Target Industry Competency Model project is intended to identify personal effectiveness, academic, and occupation specific competencies for targeted businesses within the state's Information Technology (IT) industry cluster. In the first part of this report, it is revealed that along with technical skills employers view "soft skills" as crucial to work readiness. It is also determined that these skills are fundamental to every employee's ability to perform their job effectively. Further, technical competencies for major functions in the IT industry are listed. For the sectors of **Healthcare services**, **Financial Services** and **Homeland Security** sector specific technical competencies are developed. Finally, specialized training/education programs for the most common IT occupations in the industry are also identified in this report. These results are aimed to serve as a useful human resource tool within organizations and to help shape policies that will address the skill and curriculum gaps in order to meet the future needs of Missouri businesses.