

Uses of O*NET by State of California – January 2009

The Labor Market Information Division regularly uses O*NET in ongoing skills gap analysis, when identifying transferable skills for dislocated workers, as part of industry career ladder models, and in special studies and products such as the following:

- Our newly designed and most popular product, the [California Occupational Guides](#), includes tables of O*NET tasks and skills for each occupation described.
- California uses O*NET to identify transferable skills and related occupations for dislocated workers in California, resulting in valuable tools and publications. These include [LMI Help for Workers in the Mortgage and Real Estate Industries](#), [Happy Career Trails Begin With Your Interests](#), and [LMI Help for Dislocated Workers](#). Customized studies employing O*NET and local labor market information resulted in help for workers facing layoffs in such large firms as Boeing, McClellan AFB, and Pillowtex Corporation.
- The common language of O*NET is relied upon when researching and defining emerging occupations, such as biotechnology and “green” occupations. For an example, see [Under the Microscope - Jobs in Biotechnology](#).
- Identifying and describing their skills and abilities is something most workers have difficulty doing, even highly skilled workers. O*NET far exceeds the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) in its potential for bringing skills language to “everyman.” O*NET is readily available to anyone with Internet access, and skills language can empower workers as they make career transitions. We do not witness this from our research domains and need to solicit examples from those who work directly with job seekers and career changers. Ideally, O*NET should be as well known a tool to the general public as Webster’s Dictionary. Even when not used directly, O*NET is the behind-the-scenes structure of many self-help, computer-delivered career development tools used in workforce development and education settings.
- Career paths are identified and customized training programs designed by looking at skills gaps and matches between a target occupation and related jobs. This analysis, using O*NET skills, knowledge, and abilities ratings, led to the report [Help Wanted: Making a Difference in Health Care](#).

- California employers use O*NET crosswalks to ease the transition for veterans into civilian employment. They use the Military Occupational Classification (MOC) to Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) systems to identify military occupations that can be transferred to those used in the private sector.
- California Community Colleges and state universities use the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) crosswalk search to assist in developing training programs for these occupations.

Recommended Enhancements or Changes for O*NET

- By far, the most criticism we receive about O*NET is in the Job Zones domain. The categories are too broad to use in any meaningful way in our occupational research. We most often use BLS Training Levels to identify and compare length and scope of training because of the greater extent of delineation.
- There are so many O*NET Occupational titles with “In Demand” flags that we do not trust them, given the current economic crisis. We recommend you drop the tag for now.