

Scans Information

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WHAT IS SCANS?

In 1989 President Bush and the nation's governors agreed to achieve education goals by the year 2000 that brought about the effort led by the U.S. Secretary of Labor to form the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in 1990. The Commission was to determine skills students needed to succeed in the world of work. A preliminary report of the Commission was issued in the spring of 1991, and the final report in April of 1992.

The commission argued that a high-performance work place requires workers who have a solid foundation in the basic literacy and computational skills, in the thinking skills necessary to put knowledge to work, and in the personal qualities that make workers dedicated and trustworthy.

The Commission also argued that a solid foundation is not enough. The high performance workplace requires competencies - the abilities to manage resources, to work amicably and productively with others, to acquire and use information, to master complex systems, and to work with a variety of technologies.

JUSTIFICATION FOR SCANS TRAINING

The State of Texas faces many challenges in preparing an effective work force preparation system:

The *Texas Skills Development Program* Report to the Governor recommended implementation of skill-based curricula and professional development, and the involvement of business/industry and labor in setting industry-driven skill standards and certification standards for graduates who achieve high skill levels (1993);

The *Report of the Select Committee For Higher Education* emphasized that vocational-technical education must be responsive to rapidly changing job markets, adaptable to new training technologies, and flexible for individual student needs (1988);

The Report of the *Design Committee on Apprenticeship and Career Pathways Programs* to the Texas Legislature, entitled, "School to Work Opportunities: Lessons That Last a Lifetime", recommended a Career Passport credential which would require SCANS skills enhancement as a criterion for certification (1994)

SCANS skills training provides a foundation for the individuals to succeed in a broad range of occupational areas. If we focus on SCANS, we will be able to provide the skills that employers agree are essential for workplace success.

SCANS COMPETENCIES WITH DEFINITIONS

1.0 RESOURCES

- 1.1 Manages Time: Selects relevant, goal-related activities, ranks them in order of importance, allocates time to activities, and understands, prepares, and follows schedules.
- 1.2 Manages Money: Uses or prepares budgets, including making cost and revenue forecasts, keeps detailed records to track budget performance, and makes appropriate adjustments.
- 1.3 Manages Material and Facility Resources: Acquires, stores, and distributes materials, supplies, parts, equipment, space, or final products in order to make the best use of them.
- 1.4 Manages Human Resources: Assesses knowledge and skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance, and provides feedback.

2.0 INTERPERSONAL

- 2.1 Participates as a Member of a Team: Works cooperatively with others and contributes to group with ideas, suggestions, and effort.
- 2.2 Teaches Others: Helps others to learn.
- 2.3 Serves Clients/Customers: Works and communicates with clients and customers to satisfy their

expectations.

- 2.4 Exercises Leadership: Communicates thoughts, feelings, and ideas to justify a position, encourages, persuades, convinces, or otherwise motivates an individual or groups; including responsibility challenging existing procedures, policies, or authority.
- 2.5 Negotiates: Works toward an agreement that may involve exchanging specific resources or resolving divergent interests.
- 2.6 Works with Cultural Diversity: Works well with men and women and with a variety of ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds.

3.0 INFORMATION

- 3.1 Acquires and Evaluates Information: Identifies need for data, obtains it from existing sources or creates it, and evaluates its relevance and accuracy.
- 3.2 Organizes and Maintains Information: Organizes, processes, and maintains written or computerized reports and other forms of information in a systemic fashion/
- 3.3 Uses Computers to Process Information: Employs computers to acquire, organize, analyze, and communicate information.

4.0 SYSTEMS

- 4.1 Understands Systems: Knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them.
- 4.2 Monitors and Corrects Performance: Distinguishes trends, predicts impact of actions on system operations, diagnoses deviations in the function of a system/organization, and takes necessary action to correct performance.
- 4.3 Improves and Designs Systems: Makes suggestions to modify existing systems to improve products or services, and develops new or alternative systems.

5.0 TECHNOLOGY

- 5.1 Selects Technology: Judges which set of procedures, tools, or machines, including computers and their programs will produce the desired results.
- 5.2 Applies Technology to Task: Understands the overall intent and the proper procedures for setting up and operating machines, including computers and their programming systems.
- 5.3 Maintains and Troubleshoots Technology: Prevents, identifies, or solves problems in machines, computers, and other technologies.

SCANS FOUNDATION SKILLS

6.0 BASIC SKILLS

- 6.1 Reading: Locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and documents - including manuals, graphs, and schedules to perform tasks. Learns from text by determining the main idea or essential message; identifies relevant details, facts, and specifications; infers or locates the meaning of unknown or technical vocabulary, and judges the accuracy, appropriateness, style, and plausibility of reports, proposals, or theories of other writers.
- 6.2 Writing: Communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing; records information completely and accurately; composes and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, proposals, graphs, flow charts; uses language, style, organization, and format appropriate to the subject-matter, purpose, and audience. Includes supporting documentation and attends to level of detail; checks, edits, and revises for correct information, appropriate emphasis, form, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- 6.3 Arithmetic: Performs basic computations; uses basic numerical concepts such as whole numbers and percentages in practical situations; makes reasonable estimates of arithmetic results without a calculator, and uses tables, graphs, diagrams, and charts to obtain or convey quantitative information.
- 6.4 Mathematics: Approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques; uses quantitative data to construct logical explanations for real world situations; expresses mathematical ideas and concepts orally and in writing; and understands the role of chance in the occurrence and prediction of events.
- 6.5 Listening: Receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues such as

body language in ways that are appropriate to the purpose; for example, to comprehend; to learn, to critically evaluate; to appreciate, or to support the speaker.

- 6.6 Speaking: Organizes ideas and communicates oral messages appropriate to listeners and situations; participates in conversation, discussion, and group presentations; selects an appropriate medium for conveying a message; uses verbal language and other cues such as body language appropriate in style, tone, and level of complexity to the audience and the occasion; speaks clearly and communicates a message; understands and responds to listener feedback; and asks questions when needed.

7.0 THINKING SKILLS

- 7.1 Creative Thinking: Uses imagination freely, combines ideas or information in new ways, makes connections between seemingly unrelated ideas, and reshapes goals in ways that reveal new possibilities.
- 7.2 Decision Making: Specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternatives.
- 7.3 Problem Solving: Recognizes that a problem exists (ie., there is a discrepancy between what is and what should or could be), identifies possible reasons for the discrepancy, and devises and implements a plan of action to resolve it. Evaluates and monitors progress, and revises plan as indicated by findings.
- 7.4 Mental Visualization: Organizes and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information; for example, sees a building from a blueprint, a system's operation from schematics, the flow of work activities from narrative descriptions, or the taste of food from reading a recipe.
- 7.5 Knowing How To Learn: Recognizes and can use learning techniques to apply and adapt new knowledge and skills in both familiar and changing situations. Involves being aware of learning tools such as personal learning styles (visual, aural, etc.), formal learning strategies (note taking or clustering items that share some characteristics), and informal learning strategies (awareness of unidentified false assumptions that may lead to faulty conclusions).
- 7.6 Reasoning: Discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it in solving a problem. For example, uses logic to draw conclusions from available information, extracts rules or principles from a set of objects or written text; applies rules and principles to a new situation, or determines which conclusions are correct when given a set of facts and a set of conclusion.

8.0 PERSONAL QUALITIES

- 8.1 Responsibility: Exerts a high level of effort and perseverance towards goal attainment. Works hard to become excellent at doing tasks by setting high standards, paying attention to details, working well and displaying a high level of concentration even when assigned an unpleasant task. Displays high standards of attendance, punctuality, enthusiasm, vitality, and optimism in approaching and completing tasks.
- 8.2 Self-Esteem: Believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self; demonstrates knowledge of own skills and abilities; is aware of impact on others; and knows own emotional capacity and needs and how to address them.
- 8.3 Sociability: Demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in new and ongoing group settings. Asserts self in familiar and unfamiliar social situations; relates well to other, responds appropriately as the situation requires; and takes an interest in what others say and do.
- 8.4 Self-Management: Assesses own knowledge, skills, and abilities accurately; sets well-defined and realistic personal goals, monitors progress toward goal attainment and motivates self through goal achievement; exhibits self-control and responds to feedback unemotionally and non-defensively, is a "self-starter."
- 8.5 Integrity/Honesty: Can be trusted. Recognizes when faced with making a decision or exhibiting behavior that may break with commonly held personal or societal values; understands the impact of violating these beliefs and codes on an organization, self, and others; and chooses an ethical course of action

Please Note: Information on this page is from the following sources:

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- Connecting SCANS to the Real World, Department of Commerce Conference, Austin, Texas, 1994.

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