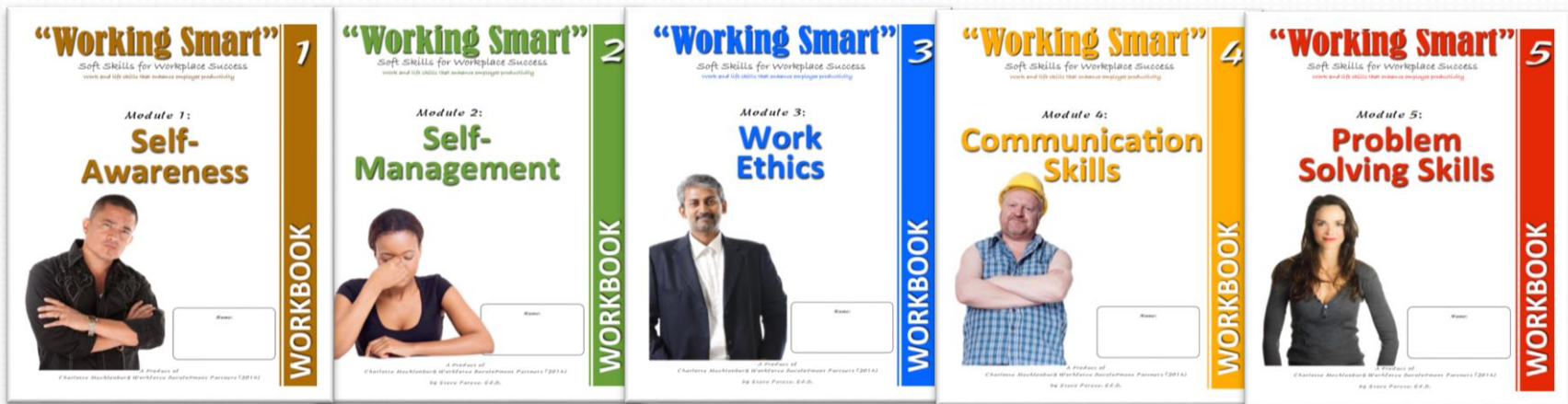


“Working Smart”

Soft Skills for Workplace Success

Work and life skills that enhance employee productivity



presented by
Patrick Graham
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Soft Skills Gap



- In 2010, a group of Charlotte-Mecklenburg workforce development partners sponsored an analysis of the workforce development sector.
- 2011 report identified fundamental sector wide issues:
 - The workforce sector operates in silos working independently;
 - Weak linkages between the sector and the employer/demand-side of workforce development;
 - Employment expectations for low-skilled workers are often too low, with entry-level jobs seen as the “end game”;
 - Individualized needs of job seekers are often not identified, and resources to address them are limited;
 - *The continuum of services for job seekers is not fully developed in Charlotte-Mecklenburg among the partners.*
 - *Little sector wide agreement of soft skills best practices*

Soft Skills Gap



- In 2012, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Workforce Development Partners (CMWDP) was formed to address report recommendations
 - Partners include: Center for Community Transitions, Charlotte Area Fund, Charlotte Works, Division of College and Career Readiness at Central Piedmont Community College, Career and Technical Education Program of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont, Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services, Economic Services Division, North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Urban League of Central Carolinas
- Top priority: Soft Skills
- CMWDP received a grant to develop the *Working Smart* soft skills curriculum

Working Smart Development

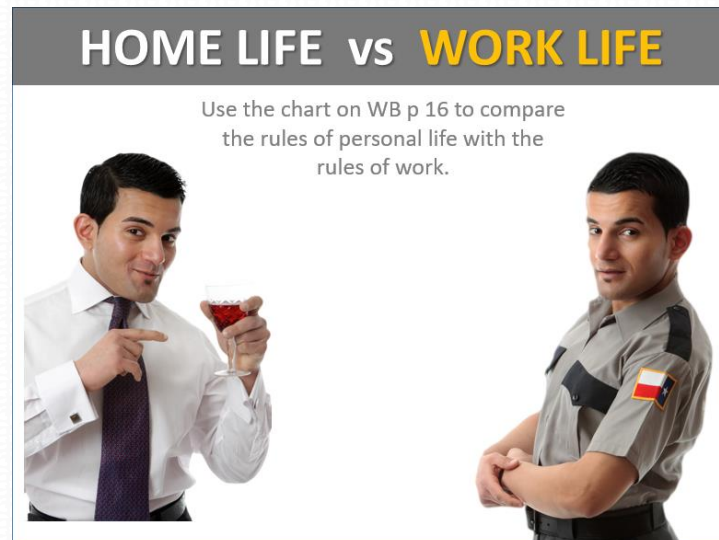


- 2013
 - The CMWDP reviewed most recent N.C. Skill Survey (2012)
 - Employers indicated the need for a workforce with strong soft skills
 - CMWDP developed and administered follow-up employer survey focusing on soft skills
 - Conducted focus group with 1,000+ employers
 - Based on employer feedback, began development of curriculum with assistance from Dr. Steve Parese, national workforce development consultant
- 2014
 - Endorsed and certified by Charlotte Works and the Partnership
 - Piloted as Working Smart by five Charlotte-based organizations & Union County collaborative

Working Smart Curriculum



- 24 hour curriculum
 - 5 interactive modules, 16 lessons
 - Based on cognitive behavioral model
- Designed for individuals with multiple barriers to employment
 - 6th grade reading level
- The curriculum includes, but not limited to:
 - Personal Branding
 - Self Change
 - Dealing With Stress
 - Personal Reactions
 - Staying Calm and Clear
 - Employer Expectations
 - Active Listening
 - 4 C's of Communication
 - Problems and Goals
 - Options and Outcomes

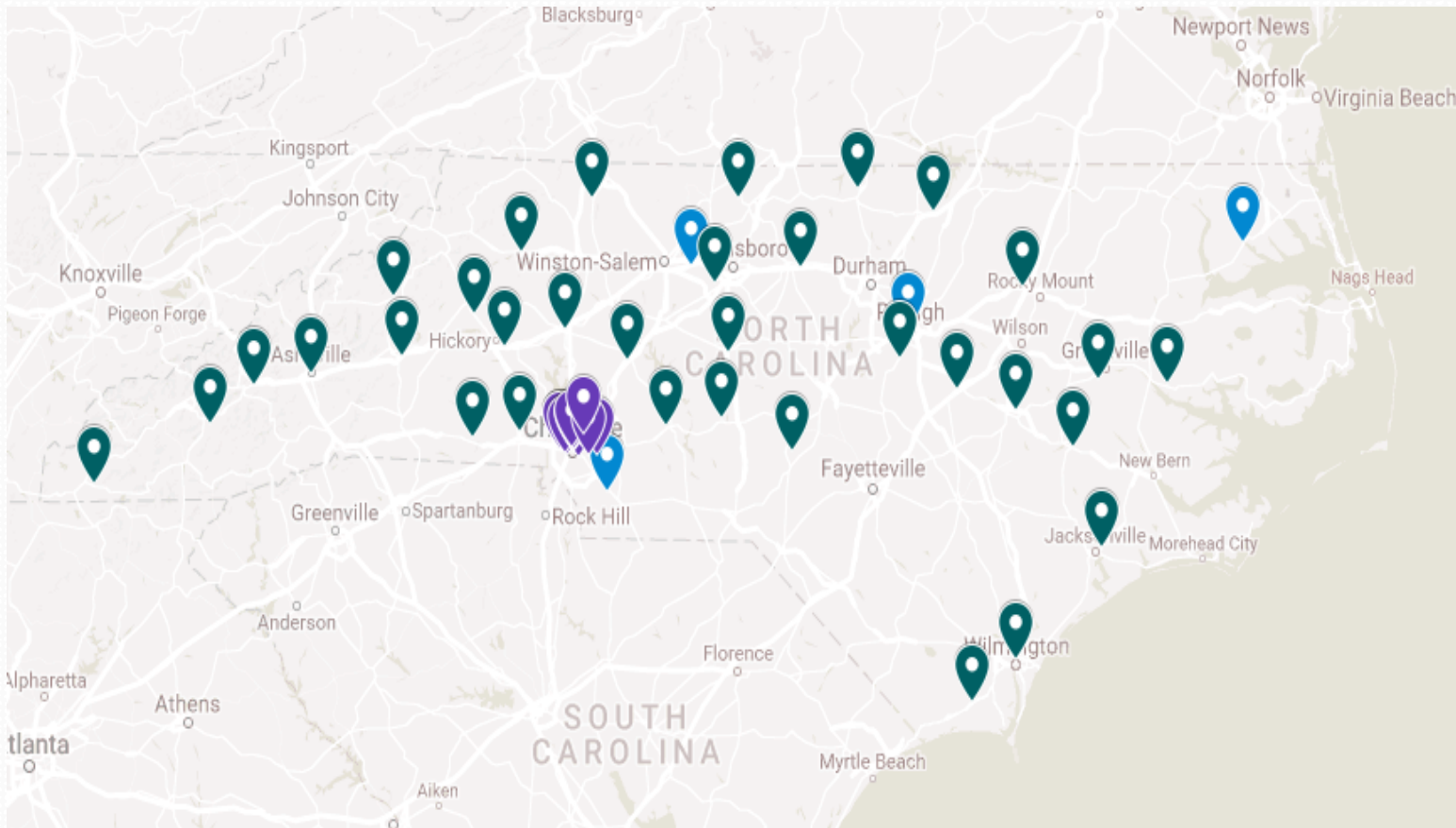


Working Smart Impact



- Since 2014:
 - Over 800 individuals Working Smart Certified in Mecklenburg County
 - Over 15 local community based organizations incorporate it into their programming
 - Adopted by:
 - Northeastern WDB, Northwestern WDB and supported by Centralina WDB, Mountain Area WDB, Kerr-Tar WDB, Turning Point WDB, Western Piedmont WDB, Gaston WDB, Southwestern WDB and Regional Partnership WDB
 - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (k-12)
 - The NC Community College System (NCCS)
 - So far over 20 Community Colleges across the state have received training to facilitate Working Smart
 - Youth Working Smart curriculum launched
 - Developing an employer pilot program for customized Working Smart training for onboarding process
 - Working Smart is currently under program evaluation
 - May 2017, report released

Working Smart's Impact



Working Smart Impact



- Allows job-seekers access to the same employer demanded and high quality training across the state
- Builds a highly skilled workforce pipeline for employers throughout North Carolina
- Addresses statewide employer needs and gaps in our current workforce
- Ensures that key concepts are emphasized in every session

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Working Smart: Bridging the Gap



- Recent study, released in January 2017, from Boston College, Harvard University, and the University of Michigan found that soft skills training, like communication and problem-solving, boosts productivity and retention by 12 percent and delivers a 250 percent return on investment based on higher productivity and retention.
- Deloitte's 2016 Global Human Capital Trends report, executives now consider soft skills important to fostering employee retention, improving leadership, and building a meaningful culture.



Questions/More Information?



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