

A yellow graphic of a right-pointing arrow with a rounded tail, containing the text "toolkit for business".

**toolkit** for business

The background features a white grid pattern in the upper left and a pattern of white dots in the lower right, both fading into the blue background.

# O\*NET at Work: HR Planning, Employee Reskilling and Retention

Two important challenges in today's workplace are 1) how to keep up with the changing skills requirements of jobs and 2) how to retain employees with the proper skills. This example application shows how Reliant Bank used O\*NET® to help address these challenges.



## The Employer's Challenge

Reliant Bank, a medium-sized financial services company, has had difficulty ensuring that it has employees with the right skills to handle its computer and information technology applications. With changes in hardware and software technology, as well as user requirements, the company has needed to continuously work on reskilling its workforce.

The President of Reliant Bank feels that it has had too much turnover from its computer and information technology (IT) jobs. Exit interviews have indicated that a primary reason for turnover is that employees want to upgrade their skills and be positioned for career advancement opportunities.

The bank has not had a framework for addressing these issues. Sharon Rogers, the Human Resources (HR) Manager, determined that the O\*NET system provides the framework and tools to help address these challenges. The following examples show how the HR manager addressed 1) Human Resource Planning — the identification of future skills requirements and how to position the organization for fulfilling these requirements, and 2) Employee Retention — facilitating the development of employees and positioning them for career advancement opportunities when they become available.

### Example 1

## Human Resource Planning

Human Resource Planning addresses the organization's future employee needs by providing a systematic process for determining current versus future knowledge and skill requirements. It requires identifying the types of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed at a future point in time and then comparing this to what is currently available. The difference, or gap, may then be addressed.

Work analysis information, as provided by O\*NET, can be a critical component of an effective HR Planning process. The Reliant HR Manager decided to use O\*NET to help address the organization's HR Planning and employee reskilling and retention issues.

The HR Manager also determined that the greatest need was in the area of information technology. Specifically, the needs were in hardware and software application support. She took these steps:



**Occupation Quick Search** enables the user to search for occupations by keyword or code. It can be accessed in the header of each O\*NET OnLine screen or by selecting **Find Occupations** on the home page.



## Step 1: Identify future staff needs.

The HR Manager met with line managers to identify future staff needs. They decided to concentrate on defining needs two years in the future. The strategic business plan for the next two years was reviewed. To accomplish its business plan, Reliant Bank needed approximately an eight percent (8%) increase in staff for computer hardware and software support.

## Step 2: Define Work and Worker Requirements of future staff needs

The HR Manager reviewed information in O\*NET OnLine. She accessed the Internet and typed in <https://www.onetonline.org>.

More information was needed on the nature of work in computer maintenance and support.

The user went to the Find Occupations screen and selected Computer and Mathematical under Job Family.

The user then selected Go.

On the Job Family list screen the user selected "Computer User Support Specialists." The Summary Report for this occupation was displayed. However, the HR Manager wished to customize the report and so she chose Custom on the View Report line.

Next, the user chose to investigate Tasks, Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities by checking the appropriate boxes within the Custom Report Menu.

For selected O\*NET Descriptors on the Custom Report Menu, users can choose the minimum score for the items displayed and the type of scale.

The user selected the Level scale for Knowledge and Skills.

The user then selected Go.

Tasks Save Table (XLS/CSV)

10 of 14 displayed

Importance	Category	Task
90	Core	Answer user inquiries regarding computer software or hardware operation to resolve problems.
82	Core	Oversee the daily performance of computer systems.

The user reviewed the key tasks of Computer User Support Specialists. The list of tasks in O\*NET provides clarity about the application of Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities.

Tasks are listed here.



**Knowledge** Save Table (XLS/CSV)

All 2 displayed

Level	Knowledge
88	<b>Computers and Electronics</b> — Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.
72	<b>Customer and Personal Service</b> — Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Next, the user reviewed the Knowledge areas.

Users can download the tables for selected O\*NET descriptors by clicking on the "save table" link.

Knowledge areas are listed in descending order by Level.

**Skills** Save Table (XLS/CSV)

All 5 displayed

Level	Skill
57	<b>Active Listening</b> — Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
57	<b>Critical Thinking</b> — Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
57	<b>Reading Comprehension</b> — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
57	<b>Speaking</b> — Talking to others to convey information effectively.
50	<b>Instructing</b> — Teaching others how to do something.

The user then reviewed the Skills.

Skill areas are presented in descending order for Computer User Support Specialists.

**Abilities** Save Table (XLS/CSV)

10 of 52 displayed (14 important)

Importance	Ability
75	<b>Oral Comprehension</b> — The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
75	<b>Oral Expression</b> — The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
75	<b>Written Comprehension</b> — The ability to read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
72	<b>Near Vision</b> — The ability to see details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
69	<b>Information Ordering</b> — The ability to arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
69	<b>Speech Clarity</b> — The ability to speak clearly so others can understand you.
66	<b>Deductive Reasoning</b> — The ability to apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
66	<b>Problem Sensitivity</b> — The ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
66	<b>Speech Recognition</b> — The ability to identify and understand the speech of another person.
66	<b>Written Expression</b> — The ability to communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.

The user then reviewed the Abilities.

Abilities are listed in descending order of Importance.

### Step 3: For gaps, define Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities required.

The HR Manager compiled the O\*NET information into a listing for the target job. This was reviewed by the IT manager and selected members of the IT staff. They reported that the information was an excellent framework for the "job of the future." They added additional information that was specific to Reliant Bank's hardware and software environment and completed the effort within an hour.



## Step 4: Create a master plan for acquiring or repositioning employees to address future needs.

The HR Manager then worked with line managers to develop a concrete plan of action for developing and acquiring employees with the required skills. A description of the jobs and job requirements was posted for current employees.

### Example 2 Employee Reskilling and Retention

The second issue that the HR Manager addressed was employee reskilling and retention. What skills are required in the future? How can employees assure that they have the skills that will enable them to advance in their career? When employees feel that they have advancement opportunities, they are more inclined to stay with the organization.

### Step 1: Identify future Knowledge, Skill, and Ability needs.

The Knowledge, Skill, and Ability requirements that were defined in Example 1 were used. In addition, the HR Manager printed out the **Summary Report** for Computer User Support Specialists.

**O\*NET OnLine** Occupation Quick Search: [Search Box]

Help Find Occupations Advanced Search Crosswalks Share O\*NET Sites

**Summary Report for:** Updated 2019  
**15-1151.00 - Computer User Support Specialists** Bright Outlook

Provide technical assistance to computer users. Answer questions or resolve computer problems for clients in person, or via telephone or electronically. May provide assistance concerning the use of computer hardware and software, including printing, installation, word processing, electronic mail, and operating systems.

**Sample of reported job titles:** Computer Specialist, Computer Support Specialist, Computer Technician, Desktop Support Technician, Help Desk Analyst, Help Desk Technician, Information Technology Specialist (IT Specialist), Network Technician, Support Specialist, Technical Support Specialist

View report: Summary Details Custom

Tasks | Technology Skills | Tools Used | Knowledge | Skills | Abilities | Work Activities | Detailed Work Activities | Work Context | Job Zone | Education | Credentials | Interests | Work Styles | Work Values | Related Occupations | Wages & Employment | Job Openings | Additional Information

**Tasks**  
 5 of 14 displayed

- Answer user inquiries regarding computer software or hardware operation to resolve problems.
- Oversee the daily performance of computer systems.
- Read technical manuals, confer with users, or conduct computer diagnostics to investigate and resolve problems or to provide technical assistance and support.

**Knowledge**  
 5 of 6 displayed

- Computers and Electronics** — Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, electronic equipment, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.
- Customer and Personal Service** — Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- English Language** — Knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

**Skills**  
 5 of 13 displayed

- Active Listening** — Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- Reading Comprehension** — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- Speaking** — Talking to others to convey information effectively.

**Abilities**  
 5 of 14 displayed

- Oral Comprehension** — The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- Oral Expression** — The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- Written Comprehension** — The ability to read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.

The Summary Report displays the most important variables within each available category for the occupation of interest.

## Step 2: Identify current Knowledge, Skill, and Ability levels.

Selected employees completed O\*NET Knowledge, Skill, and Ability questionnaires. These questionnaires were downloaded from the O\*NET Resource Center website at <https://www.onetcenter.org/questionnaires.html>. An analysis of this information identified current knowledge, skill, and ability levels.

## Step 3: Identify gaps and development opportunities.

The current Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities levels were compared to the future needs. Where gaps were identified, the employer took steps to supplement current training in preparation for future requirements.

## Step 4: Communicate career opportunities and development requirements.

Reliant Bank communicated to its employees about its future requirements and the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed. Where employees identified gaps, they initiated efforts to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, or abilities. This positioned them for future job opportunities within the organization.

As a result of these actions employee turnover was reduced.

6

## Benefits to the Employer

The employer realized a number of benefits by using O\*NET, including:

- ▶ Creating a concrete strategy for addressing its future employee needs.
- ▶ Reducing employee turnover in mission critical jobs.
- ▶ Developing consistent and thorough job descriptions.
- ▶ Saving time by leveraging O\*NET technology and information.
- ▶ Incurring no additional expense and remaining within existing budgets.
- ▶ Adopting a framework for defining jobs and work and ensuring that the organization had a thorough and systematic means of defining jobs and worker requirements across the organization.



O\*NET is brought to you by:

O\*NET Project  
Employment and Training Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Mail Stop C 4526  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20210  
[www.doleta.gov/programs/onet](http://www.doleta.gov/programs/onet)

---

National Center for O\*NET Development  
P.O. Box 27625  
Raleigh, NC 27611  
[www.onetcenter.org](http://www.onetcenter.org)