U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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News Release

US DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, COMMERCE RELEASE SKILLS–FIRST HIRING GUIDE TO HELP EMPLOYERS HIRE, PROMOTE WORKERS BASED ON SKILL, KNOWLEDGE

US Departments of Labor, Commerce release skills-first hiring guide to help employers hire, promote workers based on skill, knowledge

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Labor today published a guide designed to educate employers about the benefits of using skills-first hiring practices and encourage them to use those practices to build a better, more qualified workforce.

The Good Jobs Initiative's Skills-First Hiring Starter Kit was announced at the White House's "Classroom to Career" Summit, where President Biden and First Lady Jill Biden welcomed nearly 300 education and workforce leaders to announce new actions on workforce, career and technical education, and highlight key achievements of the Biden-Harris administration. The Skills-First Hiring Starter Kit, developed in partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce, is a short guide to hiring, promotion and management built around worker skills, rather than relying on degree qualifications.

"Skills-first hiring practices can be a way of helping workers get ahead through good jobs," Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su said. "Our Starter Kit provides the blueprint for employers to take concrete steps to begin skills-first hiring and provide economic opportunity for workers who face barriers – not because they are not highly skilled – but because of where they attained those skills."

Skills-first hiring – also known as "skills-based hiring" – refers to the hiring or promotion of workers around skills, knowledge and abilities that workers can demonstrate they have, regardless of how or where they attained those skills. The department's Good Jobs Principles promote skills-based hiring as a quality recruitment practice.

While many employers have removed four-year degree requirements for salaried jobs, employers still struggle to successfully implement skills-first hiring strategies after ending those requirements. The Starter Kit aims to give private employers more information on skills-based hiring so that they can successfully implement these practices in the workplace.

The department developed the Skills-First Hiring Starter Kit in consultation with the U.S. Department of Commerce, 16 leading organizations in the public and private sectors, as well as labor, to provide employers with the best possible resource.

Learn more about the Skills-First Starter Kit.

Learn more about the Good Jobs Initiative.

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