



WorkKeys® helps the right 911 dispatchers answer the call

Lexington County 911 Communications Center needed to find the right people for a specialized job to improve effectiveness and reduce costly turnover estimated at \$7,000+ for each operator.

RESULTS:



50%
reduction
in turnover



50%
reduction
in training costs

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS USED:



Hiring for a hectic job

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

“All 911 calls concern bad news; we don’t get any other kind,” says Nikki Rodgers, 911 Communications Coordinator. This constant pressure is a big part of why finding long-term dispatchers can be challenging. And for Lexington County, it was.

Turnover was at nearly 30%, and the loss of each dispatcher put a significant drain on the call center’s resources:

- » \$7,000 to recruit and hire a new operator
- » Six to 12 months training
- » A specialized set of skills and resilience required in a high-stress work environment

Rodgers knew something had to change.

“

There’s really no other job quite like it. Operators need computer skills, customer service skills, listening skills, stress management techniques, and the ability to concentrate in what can be a chaotic work environment.”

Nikki Rodgers
911 Communications Coordinator

Pre-employment profiling

THE SOLUTION

Rodgers looked into using WorkKeys for pre-employment testing. She began by working with an ACT-authorized job profiler, who spent time with operators and provided a report on which WorkKeys assessments were most important for the role.

The job profile targeted three WorkKeys assessments—Listening, Locating Information, and Reading for Information—and established a minimum score level for each.

Applicants took the assessments at a nearby ACT test center to help highlight candidates with the right skills. Those who did not meet the requirements were able to train and/or retake more assessments.

“

The combination of assessments really helps us be sure that the new hires have the full complement of skills we’re looking for, not just one or two.”

Nikki Rodgers

911 Communications Coordinator

COMPANY OVERVIEW

The Lexington County 911 Communications Center handles an average of 30,000 emergency calls each month—about 1,000 calls each day—making it vital that it hires the right people with the right skills to serve the citizens of the county.

The right call

OUTCOMES

IMPROVED TRAINING

“If they have the right skills, training goes more smoothly and quickly, and the stress level of both the new hire and the assigned training ‘buddy’ is also reduced.”

Nikki Rodgers

911 Communications Coordinator

REDUCED TURNOVER

Turnover was reduced from slightly more than 30% to less than 15% in the first full year of implementation—a reduction of 50%.

COST SAVINGS

“It has saved money. The cost of the revolving door—hiring, training, letting people go; hiring, training, letting people go—is much higher than hiring the right people with the right skills to begin with.”

Nikki Rodgers

911 Communications Coordinator

ACT WORK READY COMMUNITIES



Lexington County is proudly one of South Carolina’s ACT Work Ready Communities, a collection of businesses leveraging the National Career Readiness Certificate™ (NCRC®) to close the skills gap and strengthen their region’s economy.

See what other counties are work ready at www.workreadycommunities.org.