Information and Communication Technology Literacy and Employability: 
Exploring Workforce Readiness and Employer Expectations in the Atlanta Region 
Healthcare Industry.

As our economy changes from one heavily reliant on manual labor and manufacturing to 
one dependent on knowledge and information, information and communication technology (ICT) 
literacy becomes a key component of economic growth. ICT literacy includes the ability to use 
electronic communication tools to locate and analyze relevant information, transmit appropriate 
data, and create solutions to social and economic problems (Gallardo, 2015). ICT is an umbrella 
term that includes any communication device or application, such as radio, television, cellular 
phones, computers and network hardware and software. ICT is also associated with the various 
services and applications linked to these devices such as texting, video conferencing and distance 
learning (Gallardo, 2015).

As facets of ICT become deeply ingrained in the workplace, employees are expected to 
have a level of ICT literacy necessary to be effective at their jobs. Frequently, however, 
employers expect that employees will have the requisite skill level without documented skill 
requirements or formal skill assessment (Gibbs, 2014). In partnership with the Atlanta 
Workforce Development Agency (AWDA), this research project will be conducted with the aim 
of documenting employer expectations of employee ICT literacy within the Atlanta area 
healthcare industry and assess ICT literacy levels among individuals looking for employment in 
this sector. The city agency provides job seekers with resources to attain sustainable 
employment and collaborates with business leaders for the recruitment and development of their 
labor needs. The AWDA is currently developing partnerships in the Atlanta healthcare industry 
and is interested in characterizing employer needs and developing skills in potential employees. 
The project objective is to evaluate ICT readiness among jobseekers who want entry-level 
positions in healthcare and to document a mismatch or harmony of ICT skills needed to perform 
these jobs effectively.

This research fits in the broader literature of how the digital divide is evolving from an 
issue of access to computers and digital equipment to an issue of skills needed to find 
information and communicate using available technology. The introduction of computers and 
other technologies will not remove the skills gap. As new technological tools continue to 
develop, new gaps will arise (Ameil, 2006). An approach focusing on ICT literacy is a 
maintainable way to avoid current and future technological divides (ibid.).
References

