DISCLAIMER
The study was conducted by the Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) at Wichita State University (WSU). The PPMC is an independent research body unaffiliated with the Kansas Department of Commerce. This report was prepared by the research team. It represents the findings, views, opinions and conclusions of the research team alone, and the report does not express the official or unofficial policy of WSU.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The PPMC would like to thank the staff of the Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Services Division for their commitment to advancing excellence in public service and serving the state. This project is only one example of their commitment to improving services and addressing needs of the residents of Kansas. In addition, the PPMC would like to acknowledge and express sincere appreciation to the secret shoppers for their work and dedication to this project. For purposes of protecting their anonymity, names will not be included in this report, but their critical effort still should be acknowledged and recognized.
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Executive Summary

The Public Policy and Management Center (PPMC) completed its second year of evaluating the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC) Workforce Center. The evaluation utilized a group of eight “secret shoppers” who posed as clients with different scenarios at 14 local workforce centers across the state. Secret shoppers evaluated the centers on 32 separate metrics to develop a comprehensive view of the client experience at each site.

Data collected in the 2018 evaluation was also compared to the evaluations conducted in 2017. The number of shoppers and sites varied between the two years with one more shopper and five more sites evaluated in 2018. Two-year comparisons for the available sites provided a progress report for the intervention strategies that resulted from the 2017 evaluation.

Based on the analysis, several key themes emerged.

• Sites rated in 2017 improved or maintained “excellent” and “good” ratings across most metrics in 2018 evaluations with some limited exceptions.
• Over 80% of evaluators waited less than five minutes to get assistance at all locations.
• Almost 92% of evaluators found representatives from the workforce centers to be courteous.
• Nearly 86% of evaluators rated staff listening skills as “excellent” or “good.”
• Evaluators felt that representatives understood their situations over 86% of the time.

From the analysis, the PPMC developed a series of six recommendations to continue improvement of current efforts and to address gaps identified by evaluators. The recommendations are:

• Continue refining intake processes, with a goal to standardize the process for all workforce centers;
• Incorporate customer management skills into training efforts, particularly in dealing with difficult people and people with disabilities;
• Expand access to specialized staffing by leveraging technology;
• Continue improvements to the KANSASWORKS.com website for better user experiences;
• Invest and update technology at centers to improve access for people with disabilities and ensure that computers are functional; and
• Raise site awareness by encouraging centers to expand signage and décor to be more user-friendly.
From March through September 2018, the PPMC coordinated 112 secret shopper evaluations with eight different shoppers at 14 different workforce centers across the state. Shoppers represented diverse ages, races, job experiences and education levels, and included veterans and a person with disabilities. Each shopper used a unique script developed to represent different population segments who access services.

On average, the evaluators spent four to five hours participating in project orientation and training. This training included script and scenario development individualized for each shopper, online application training, role-playing rehearsal and overview of the workforce delivery system. Evaluators were also trained on consistent and reliable use of the evaluation tool and participated in a pilot evaluation.

PPMC staff worked closely with the KDOC project team to identify customer categories or roles that represent the diverse cross section of customers served. The following scenarios were identified:

- Person with a disability (blindness)
- Person of color with new educational achievement looking for a career change
- Retiree worker returning to work
- Person speaking English as a second language (ESL)
- Underemployed worker looking for trade skills and career change
- Unemployed, young single parent with limited skills and employment history
- Veteran seeking an employment change
- Recent high school graduate with limited skills and employment history

The PPMC identified evaluators to best fit each scenario. Evaluators did not disclose their role or the intent of their involvement to workforce staff. From March through September 2018, the PPMC coordinated 112 secret shopper evaluations, with eight roles played by 12 different individuals. Three different individuals were used for the recent high school graduate with limited skills and employment history scenario. Two veterans and two seniors returning to the workforce participated in the evaluation process. Shoppers evaluated 14 different workforce centers across the state: Dodge City, Emporia, Garden City, Great Bend, Independence, Junction City, Kansas City, Lawrence, Lenexa, Pittsburg, Salina, Topeka and Wichita.

Using smartphones or tablets, evaluators completed a web-based assessment immediately following each site visit. The same assessment was used by every evaluator at every site. Quantitative and
qualitative information was collected by each evaluator at each site. PPMC researchers conducted follow-up statistical screening to verify that response patterns were reflective of the service received, based on comments provided by the evaluators.

For the 2018 evaluations, there were multiple evaluators presenting the same scenario in some instances. Additional statistical and qualitative analysis was utilized to determine if responses were consistent across reviewers and to recognize any habitual pattern responses. Based on that analysis, it was determined that the responses were consistent across all sites allowing comparison of practices among the sites.

When conducting evaluations, participants typically visited each site in small groups of two or three to reduce travel expenses. Visits were staggered to ensure unique interactions. At the end of the project, a group debriefing session was conducted with all of the evaluators to identify comparative information from their site visits. Further interviews were conducted with the disabled, person of color and underemployed evaluators who attempted to access additional services beyond those initially provided.

In 2017, a similar process was used to evaluate workforce centers in nine communities: Emporia, Great Bend, Independence, Junction City, Kansas City, Lenexa, Salina, Topeka and Wichita. From the 2017 evaluation, a series of continuous improvement strategies were implemented. A critical element of the strategies was a focus on customer service training. Part of the 2018 evaluation was to determine the impact of these continuous improvement strategies at the nine locations evaluated in 2017. References to the 2017 study are included in recommendations and the site-specific evaluations for the nine centers previously reviewed.
Overall Findings

The overall results from the secret shopper evaluations were extremely positive regarding the customer service experience across the 14 workforce centers. Key points about the experience include:

• Over 80% of shoppers waited less than five minutes to receive service.
• Almost 92% of respondents found representatives from the workforce centers to be courteous.
• Nearly 86% of evaluators rated staff listening skills as “excellent” or “good.”
• Evaluators felt that representatives understood their situation over 86% of the time.
• More than three-quarters of evaluators felt that representatives effectively explained the process of receiving services.
• Nearly 89% rated the atmosphere at the workforce center as “excellent” or “good.”
• Over three-quarters of the evaluators indicated an “excellent” or “good” rating for staff providing a sense of encouragement about finding a job.
• Evaluators observed the receptionist effectively interacting with other customers 86% of the time.

While the overall experience was positive, there are still opportunities to improve user experiences. The areas for improvement are process and resource driven rather than customer service based. Opportunities for improvement include:

• Consistent registration or intake processes. For example, 43% of the time evaluators were asked for their Social Security numbers, whereas 57% of the times they were not asked for Social Security numbers.
• Helpfulness of staff. Evaluators rated the helpfulness of staff in creating a KANSASWORKS.com account as “excellent” or “good” about two-thirds of the time, which leaves room for improvement.
• Tools and resources beneficial to the job search. Only 70% of the evaluators indicated an “excellent” or “good” rating about the tools and resources being beneficial for a job search.
• Access to functional assistive technology for disabled customers. This was generally a barrier at most locations.
Evaluators’ overall experiences were positive, with each site providing unique experiences, impressions and outcomes. Based on the evaluation process, a series of best practice recommendations for continuous improvement were developed. Information from the surveys and debriefing sessions led to the following recommendations.

1. Continue Refining Intake Process

Variances in intake processes were identified in the 2017 evaluations. As a result, the KDOC began a process to standardize the intake process and establish protocols for all workforce centers to use. Progress has been made, however there are still variations by location and in some instances by individual staff serving customers at a specific location. The data on shoppers who were asked to provide Social Security numbers indicated the need for continued intake process improvements. KANSASWORKS.com does not require a Social Security number, but some evaluators were told they could not be served without providing a Social Security number. Officially, workforce centers cannot require Social Security numbers to provide services.

Further refinement on the process for creating a KANSASWORKS.com account creation is advised. A portion of the evaluators were directed to create a KANSASWORKS.com profile online, while others received a personalized evaluation before being directed to create an account. At some locations, workforce center staff checked the KANSASWORKS database for user profiles, while staff at other locations did not. Another variation was the use of a resource list and service referrals, which some evaluators received immediately, while others did not. While workforce centers may have their own customer flow procedures to manage traffic, there should be consistency in customer experience and non-personalized outcomes, such as receiving a review of a KANSASWORKS.com registration in both self- and staff-created circumstances.

Continuing to refine the intake process will help improve performance. Clearly the emphasis placed on customer services, started after the 2017 evaluation, and has improved performance at the eight sites reviewed. A standardized intake process should yield similar benefits. Process improvements and follow-up training with staff are recommended.

2. Build Customer Management Skills

Evaluators were generally positive about the courtesy and customer service experience for each site. Customer service training, developed and implemented after the 2017 evaluation, appears to have improved the performance in customer service across the previously evaluated sites. Sites new to the evaluation process in 2018 also had positive scores for customer service. There was marked improvement in ratings by the individual speaking English as a second language (ESL), who reported excellent service in nearly all locations. Continued emphasis on customer service training should be integrated in staff training requirements and during the hiring process.

Several evaluators noted instances where workforce staff were dealing with disruptive clients. In some cases, interactions went well, with the staff dealing effectively with the client. In other instances the
staff struggled with challenging client behavior, which had a direct impact on the evaluator’s sense of well-being at the facility. Expanding training to include dealing with challenging clients and conflict resolution skills will enhance customer service capacity for staff, as well as the experience for other clients.

Continued emphasis on dealing with diverse clientele should be prioritized. Again, there was marked improvement with the ESL evaluator, but other issues were raised through the evaluation process. Some of the female evaluators felt they did not receive the same level of service as their male counterparts at the same facility. The retiree and person of color evaluators also reported sites where they felt they did not receive a level of service consistent with other evaluators. Continued customer service training focused on diversity should be considered to address this issue.

3. Focus on Assisting People with Disabilities
Assisting people with disabilities requires additional customer service attention and in some cases additional technologies. The 2018 evaluator with a disability was legally blind and found that all centers were not adequately equipped to deal with this disability. At all locations, the evaluator struggled with adaptive technology to assist with viewing computer screens. At the majority of centers the technology was nonexistent; and if it was available, the technology tended to be outdated or inoperable.

The evaluator also indicated that many of the workforce staff did not appear to know how to handle someone with a visual disability or simply did not have sufficient time to work with him individually. In the 2017 survey of workforce center staff, working with individuals with disabilities was identified as a weakness by several respondents. Additional training and exposure to individuals with disabilities should be considered to improve user experiences and outcomes.

Additionally, there appeared to be distinct differences in the ability of local workforce centers to refer persons with disabilities to local community resources. Vocational rehabilitation resources were frequently noted by the disabled shopper, however there seemed to be a lack of coordination or understanding about what referral resources were available. Creating a local or regional resource guide may help in creating quality referrals to services. Establishing or joining other resource teams that include local workforce center staff and local providers, such as Disability Awareness Resource Teams or Provider Leadership Networks could improve the connection of clients to resources. Connecting high-need clients with quality local resources should be a workforce center norm, which can be achieved through increased communication and coordination among providers of such resources.

4. Expand Access to Specialized Staffing
Workforce centers offer specialized staff to deal with specific categories of clients, particularly youth and veteran clients. When evaluators were able to meet directly with specialized staff, they reported more positive experiences. This was particularly true with veteran evaluators, who were very complimentary of veteran affairs staff interactions. The physical distance between sites and limitation of resources may make it unfeasible to provide specialized staffing at all locations. Leveraging technology such as video conferencing is a viable option for increasing access to specialized staffing. Exploring potential partnership opportunities with local community colleges and universities providing adult education could also offer more access to specialized staffing and resource sharing.
5. Intuitive Website Design and User Interaction

The KANSASWORKS.com website is an integral part of the workforce center experience. The 2017 evaluation report recommended evaluating and enhancing the website to improve user experiences. Modifications have taken place, but 2018 evaluators indicated that further refinements are needed. In response to shifting client demand, KANSASWORKS was integrated into a smartphone application that launched in October 2018. With the addition of the app, user options have expanded and should become more user-friendly. As the demographics of the workforce continue to change, maintaining an intuitive, user-friendly KANSASWORKS.com platform will be necessary for continued success.

6. Invest in Technology for Accessibility

The majority of workforce centers had positive overall atmosphere responses. However one area of concern was the availability and condition of technology at some sites. At some locations, computer terminals were not available or did not work. This problem was identified by several shoppers. However, it was a larger barrier for the evaluator with a visual disability. Since a majority of resources are available online at the workforce center, priority should be placed on investing in updated, fully functional computer terminals.

The Kansas Department of Commerce has purchased ADA computers, tools, and software over the years and donated these to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB). ADA accessibility reviews were conducted at each workforce center within the past five years resulting in recommendations for improvements and training. It is the LWDB’s responsibility to maintain ADA-accessible facilities and provide adequate technology. Clarification of this duty and any responsibilities related to facilities and equipment replacement should be provided in writing to each LWDB. If needed, offer additional assistance with capital improvement and equipment replacement planning to local boards. Developing equipment replacement and facility improvement plans would offer direction for investment and could help ensure that the local workforce centers are meeting their obligation to users.

7. Improve Site Awareness

The physical environment of the workforce centers was noted in the 2017 evaluation as a potential area for improvement. Evaluations in 2018 echo many of the same issues, including need for updated décor and improved ambiance. While evaluations of the décor and ambiance can be subjective, having safe facilities that are easy to find is critical for usage. Being able to locate sites in Independence, Garden City, Lenexa and Emporia was a challenge for multiple shoppers. Some also indicated that the neighborhood around the center made them uncomfortable. While relocating facilities may be unfeasible, having clear building signage, wayfinding signage and adequate lighting could help address these issues.
The ultimate goal of each workforce center is to provide all clients the tools and opportunity to secure and maintain gainful employment. Evaluators were encouraged to keep that overall goal in mind and evaluate if they would feel supported and equipped to find desired employment after interacting with the center. Evaluators were encouraged to provide objective assessments of their experience at each location rather than compare experiences between the sites during the process. Aggregating the evaluations allows for an objective assessment of the workforce centers as a whole and as individual sites.

■ Referral Services and Information Provided

Shoppers were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of referral services and information provided at workforce centers. The percent of shoppers rating centers as “excellent” or “good” in the 2018 evaluation is shown in Figure 1.1. The majority of respondents felt that the referral services and information provided were “excellent” or “good” in all but two locations. Compared to other sites, Garden City scored lowest on both referral services and information provided, and Junction City scored low on information provided.

Figure 1.1 • Referral Services and Information Provided 2018

■ Knowledgeable Responses and Processes for Services

Shoppers rated the workforce centers’ processes for receiving services and their perceptions of how knowledgeable staff were in responding to their questions. Figure 1.2 shows the percentages of “excellent” and “good” ratings for these categories for 2018. Garden City was lowest compared to other sites, with Junction City also rating low on knowledgeable responses to questions.
Survey responses marked “excellent” were compared for four variables including shoppers’ perceptions of staff’s courtesy, attentive listening, ability to help in their job search and encouragement they received from workforce staff. Only “excellent” ratings are reviewed, to determine highest performance on these items.

Courtesy was generally more highly rated than listening skills. Dodge City, Emporia, Lawrence, Pittsburg, Salina and Wichita received the highest ratings while Garden City and Junction City received the fewest “excellent” ratings.
Encouragement in Job Search and Ability to Help

Shoppers were asked to rate the level of encouragement they received for their job search and their perception of the amount of help provided. Half of the sites had higher ratings for levels of encouragement than ratings for help provided. Dodge City, Lawrence and Pittsburg had the highest ratings on encouragement, while Independence, Topeka, Junction City and Garden City had the fewest “excellent” ratings. Emporia and Lawrence had the highest number of “excellent” scores for help, and Junction City had the lowest percentage of “excellent” ratings.

Figure 1.4 • Encouragement and Help 2018

Shopper Comparisons

Secret shoppers assumed roles for the comparison shopping at the 14 workforce locations. Shopper scenarios were English as a second language (ESL), a person of color, a veteran, an underemployed worker, a person with a disability (legally blind), a youth with a child, a recent high school graduate and a senior citizen. These ratings represent perceptions of the shoppers’ experiences at all the workforce centers. It is reasonable to assume that their profile roles may account, in part, for differences in ratings. However, other factors, such as speaking with different workforce employees, may also account for rating differences.

Table 1.1 • Percent of “Excellent” Ratings for Workforce Centers - 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ESL</th>
<th>Person of Color</th>
<th>Veteran</th>
<th>Under-employed</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Youth with a Child</th>
<th>Recent High School Graduate</th>
<th>Senior Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Help</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of “excellent” rating for listening was highest for the ESL and recent high school graduate shoppers. The veteran, youth with a child and person of color reported the lowest number of excellent experiences for listening. Courtesy was rated “excellent” over 50% of the time by all shoppers.
except the person with a disability. Excellent levels of encouragement were reported over 50% of the time by the ESL, recent high school graduate and senior citizen shoppers.

The fewest “excellent” ratings for encouragement were reported by the person of color, veteran and person with a disability. Ratings of “excellent” for the ability to help were reported over 50% of the time by the ESL, recent high school graduate and senior citizen. The lowest ratings for ability to help were from the veteran and youth with a child.

- **Overall Positive Atmosphere**

Shoppers were asked to evaluate the overall atmosphere of the center during their visit. More than 70% of shoppers rated centers “excellent” or “good” in all sites except Garden City and Great Bend.

*Figure 1.5 • Overall Positive Atmosphere 2018*

"Excellent/Good" Shopper Responses*
Overall Positive Atmosphere 2018

*Two of the eight site visits took place at the temporary location.*
Nine sites participated in the 2017 study and were repeated in the 2018 study, allowing a comparison of performance between 2017 and 2018. All sites demonstrated improvement on some of the measured indicators, including referral services, information provided, staff knowledge, processes for services, listening, courtesy and overall atmosphere of the center. Centers are to be commended for their gains in customer service improvements.

**Referral Services and Information Provided**

Comparing the 2018 results with the 2017 evaluation of the effectiveness of referral services shows substantial improvement for six sites, with two sites unchanged and one site (Salina) slipping slightly. However, since Salina was extremely highly rated (100%) in 2017, the decline to 75% may not be a cause for concern. Wichita and Emporia received 100% ratings in 2018. This is a significant improvement for Emporia from 16% in 2017. Great Bend, Junction City, Kansas City and Topeka all posted large improvements over 2017 levels.

*Figure 2.1 • Referral Services 2017-2018*

As shown in Figure 2.2, over two-thirds of the sites had positive ratings higher than 70% for the information provided at the workforce centers. This represented substantial improvements for Emporia, Independence and Kansas City. Junction City had a 43% “excellent/good” rating in 2017 but declined to 38% in 2018.
### Knowledgeable Responses and Processes for Services

Comparing the 2018 results with the 2017 ratings for knowledgeable responses to questions, Emporia showed the most improvement, doubling their rating to 100%. Independence and Kansas City also showed substantial improvement. Salina and Topeka slipped slightly, but still had strong positive ratings of over 75%. The remaining sites were stable.

As shown in Figure 2.4, Emporia and Great Bend posted substantial improvements in processes for services, achieving 100% positive ratings. Junction City also demonstrated substantial improvement, increasing from 29% to 63%. Lenexa and Wichita posted gains, increasing to 88%. Independence, Kansas City, Salina and Topeka slipped, but all still remain at over 50% “excellent” or “good” ratings.
Shoppers rated the workforce centers’ overall positive atmospheres. Figure 1.5 shows the percentages of “excellent” and “good” ratings for these categories for 2018.

**Listening and Courtesy**

Comparing only “excellent” ratings, listening improved substantially between 2017 and 2018, with five of the nine workforce centers showing improvement. Emporia, Independence and Junction City showed the largest improvement, between 2017 and 2018. Great Bend and Salina slightly increased the percent of “excellent” ratings in listening. Kansas City and Topeka dropped to 38% in 2018. Wichita slipped slightly, but retained a high rating at 63% “excellent” responses.
Eight of the nine centers had very positive ratings for courtesy in 2017, posting 60% or higher “excellent” ratings. Courtesy improved substantially for Emporia, Great Bend and Independence. Junction City fell to 25% in 2018, which was the lowest courtesy response compared to peers.

**Figure 2.6 • Courtesy 2017-2018**

Encouragement in Job Search and Ability to Help

While listening and courtesy reflect the staffs’ customer service skills, levels of encouragement and ability to help measures may be influenced by market conditions in the communities served by the workforce centers and the fit of skills with the available positions in the communities. The shopper scenarios tended to be lower skilled, inexperienced, or special needs workers, so skill gaps may also influence perceived prospects for employment.

**Figure 2.7 • Encouragement 2017-2018**
Between 2017 and 2018, perceptions about the workforce centers’ ability to help with their job search (Figure 2.8) showed improvement in Emporia, Great Bend, Junction City and Kansas City. Emporia, Great Bend and Salina had the strongest showing, with 60% or more “excellent” ratings. Declines in encouragement levels in some of the larger urban areas including Overland Park, Salina and Wichita were comparatively large and may have been impacted by local economic conditions more than staff performance issues.

**Figure 2.8 • Ability to Help 2017-2018**

#### Overall Positive Atmosphere

The overall positive atmosphere is a perception measure of evaluators’ impression of the workforce center. All centers achieved 75% or greater ratings. Emporia, Independence and Junction City made the largest gains. Topeka fell slightly, from 100% in 2017 to 88% in 2018, which is still a strong positive response.

**Figure 2.9 • Overall Positive Atmosphere 2017-2018**
Shopper Comparisons 2017 to 2018

In comparing shoppers’ perceptions from 2017 and 2018 studies, caution should be used due to several inconsistent factors between the studies. The studies are not exact duplicates. There were 14 sites in 2018 and nine sites in 2017. In addition, there was an additional shopper profile in 2018: the youth with a child. More significantly, different individuals served as shoppers in 2017 and 2018 so we do not have a common baseline of perceptions by the same evaluator. However, some general overall trends may be informative.

Table 1.2 shows the changes in ratings between 2017 and 2018. Positive ratings show increases and negative indicate declines between 2017 and 2018. In general, listening, courtesy, level of encouragement and ability to help ratings improved in 2018, compared to 2017.

Improvements in these four measures were noted by the ESL, recent high school graduate and the senior citizen. The veteran and person with a disability showed substantial decreases in positive perceptions of all services in 2018, compared to 2017. This difference could be due, in part, to different levels of expectations by the shoppers and different severity levels of disabilities (dyslexia in 2017 and blindness in 2018).

The person of color reported a substantial improvement in courtesy, with listening and encouragement stable, but there was a 9% reduction in the perception of staff’s ability to help. The underemployed shopper reported little change in listening, courtesy and ability to help, but reported a 32% increase in encouragement.

Table 1.2 • Percent of “Excellent” Ratings for Workforce Centers - Difference between 2018 and 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ESL</th>
<th>Person of Color</th>
<th>Veteran</th>
<th>Under-employed</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Recent High School Graduate</th>
<th>Senior Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-31%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-7%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>-32%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-38%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Help</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-9%</td>
<td>-31%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Client Experience

As a whole, the workforce centers should be commended for the high-quality services they provide to customers across the state of Kansas. Based on the secret shoppers’ experiences and the class participant interviews, the majority of sites provided timely, helpful and customer-friendly services. Shoppers reported sites rated in 2017 improved or maintained “excellent” and “good” ratings across most metrics in 2018, with some limited exceptions. Over 80% of evaluators waited less than five minutes to get assistance at all locations and almost 92% of shoppers found representatives to be courteous. Eighty-six percent of shoppers rated staff listening skills as “excellent” or “good.” Evaluators felt that representatives understood their problems over 86% of the time.

In the analysis of the high-user focus group, the clients spoke highly of the workforce centers' staff, finding them to be helpful and welcoming during their visits. The most helpful services offered included help and access to the computers, job fairs, and packets that helped find jobs. Most of the clients mentioned they had used other agencies to help find work, but had negative outcomes with external agencies (LaborMax, Mapower, etc.). Other services that clients found beneficial include Dress for Success, job fairs and the Nextdoor App. Additional internal services clients found beneficial were case management, classes, and referrals.

While the overall shopper experiences were positive, there are opportunities to improve the user experience. The areas for improvement were primarily process and resource driven rather than customer service based. Opportunities for improvement are identified below.

- High-user clients suggested enhancing the user experience of the KANSASWORKS.com website.
- The evaluators rated staff helpfulness in creating a KANSASWORKS.com account as “excellent” or “good” about two-thirds of the time, which leaves room for improvement.
- Evaluators experienced different registration or intake processes. For example, 43% of the time evaluators were asked for their Social Security numbers, whereas 57% of the time they were not.
- 70% of the evaluators indicated an “excellent” or “good” rating about the tools and resources being beneficial to a job search. In addition, the high-user clients requested more job-seeking resources, such as information about what employers ask of applicants, and more opportunities for job fairs and classes.
- All locations could benefit from addressing barriers to services, particularly the need for assistive technologies for the disabled clients.

Secret Shopper Experience