

APPRENTICESHIP—The Basics

What do a computer programmer, an electrician, an office manager, a home health aide, and a wind turbine technician all have in common? They are all jobs that can be learned through an apprenticeship. While 75 years ago the apprenticeship system started in construction and other skilled trades, today there are apprenticeships in over 1,000 occupations – including careers in Healthcare, Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Mechatronics, and Energy just to name a few.

Registered Apprenticeship is a tried-and-true approach for preparing workers for jobs – and meeting the business needs for a highly-skilled workforce that continues to innovate and adapt to meet the needs of the 21st century. Businesses that use apprenticeship reduce worker turnover by fostering greater employee loyalty, increasing productivity, and improving the bottom line. Apprenticeships offer workers a way to start new careers with good wages. Workforce organizations, employers, and training institutions can use apprenticeship as a proven employment and training strategy.

Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines on-the-job learning with related classroom instruction that increases an apprentice’s skill level and wages. It is a proven solution for businesses to recruit, train, and retain highly skilled workers. Apprenticeship is not just for the private sector – many federal government agencies, including the U.S. military, have apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeship is a flexible training strategy that can be customized to meet the needs of every business. It can be integrated into current training and human resource development strategies. Apprentices can be new hires – or businesses can select current employees to join the apprenticeship program. Apprenticeships are a good way to reward high-performing entry-level employees and move them up the career ladder within the business.

Apprenticeship is also an “earn and learn” model – apprentices receive a paycheck from day one, so they earn wages while they learn on the job. Over 400,000 apprentices participate every year in about 20,000 Registered Apprenticeship programs across the country.

Benefits for Business

Highly skilled employees, reduced turnover costs, higher productivity, more diverse workforce, tax credits, and training grant opportunities.

Benefits for Workers

“Earn while you learn”, Increased skills, higher wages, wage progression based on skills acquired, National credential, and career advancement.

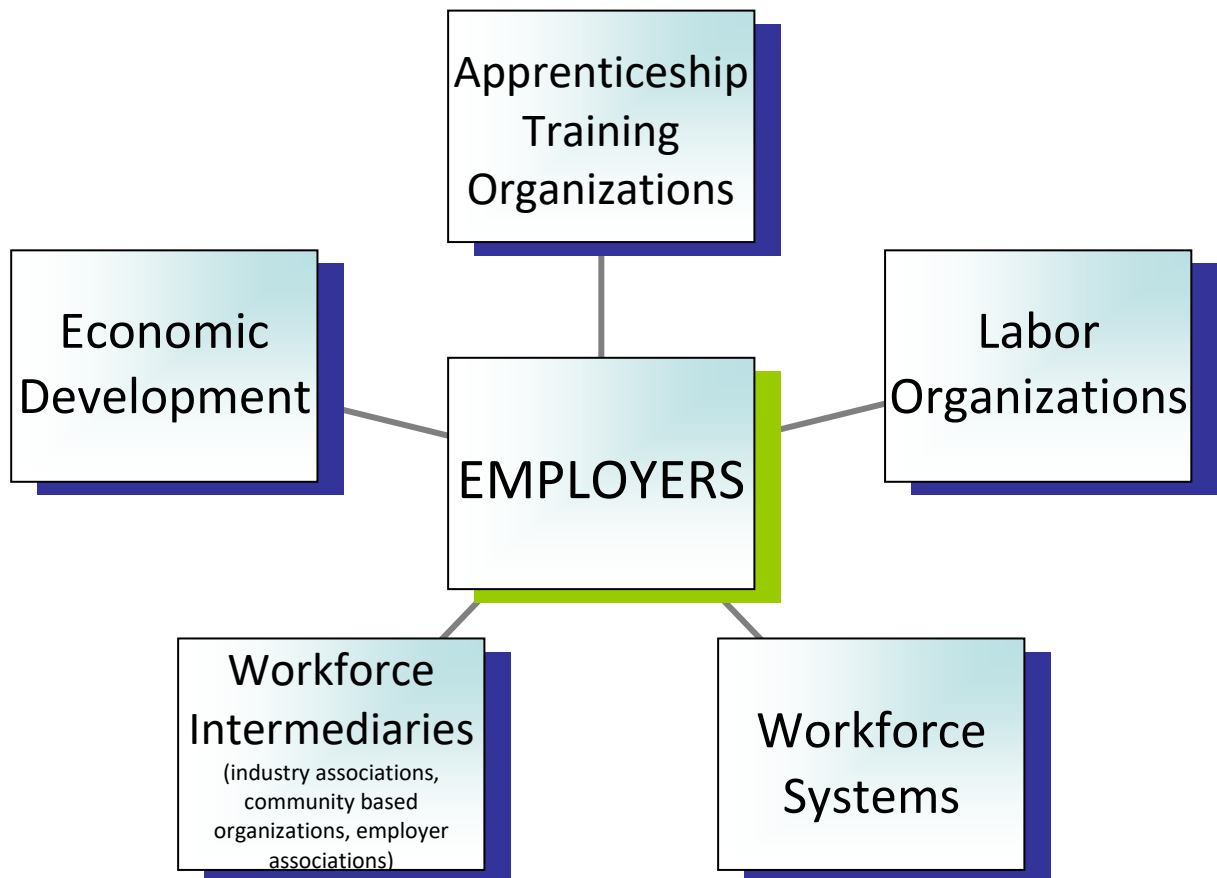
Benefits for Workforce Development

Proven model to help job seekers immediately start working and increase skills and earnings, effective strategy to connect with employers in diverse fields and to use as part of an industry sector strategy.

Whether you are a growing business, a workforce intermediary helping employers build a skilled workforce, or educating the local workforce, what workforce challenges have you identified?

1. Jobs for which it is difficult to find workers with the right skills?
2. Positions with high turnover?
3. Occupations where a highly skilled workforce is retiring soon?
4. Challenges helping workers keep pace with continuing industry advances?
5. Positions requiring skills that can be learned on the job?
6. Difficulty in attracting new and more diverse talent pools?

If the answer is “yes” to any of these questions, then apprenticeship can meet your needs.



Core Components of Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship programs consist of five core components: direct business involvement, on-the-job training, related instruction, rewards for skill gains, and completion resulting in a national occupational credential.

Direct Business Involvement.

Employers are the foundation of every apprenticeship program and the skills needed by their workforce are at the core. Businesses must play an active role in building the program and be involved in every step in designing the apprenticeship.

On-the-Job Training.

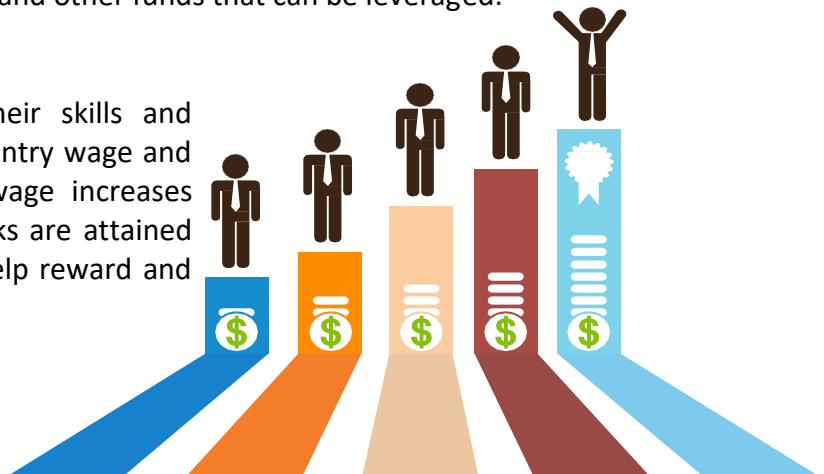
Every program includes structured on-the-job training. Apprentices get hands-on training from an experienced mentor at the job site for typically not less than one year. On-the-job training is developed through mapping the skills and knowledge that the apprentice must learn over the course of the program to be fully proficient at the job.

Related Instruction.

Apprentices receive related instruction that complements on-the-job learning. This instruction delivers the technical, workforce, and academic competencies that apply to the job. It can be provided by a community college, a technical school, or an apprenticeship training school – or by the business itself. Education partners collaborate with business to develop the curriculum based on the skills and knowledge needed by apprentices. All partners work together to identify how to pay for the related instruction, including the cost to the employer and other funds that can be leveraged.

Rewards for Skill Gains.

Apprentices receive increases in pay as their skills and knowledge increase. Start by establishing an entry wage and an ending wage, and build in progressive wage increases through the apprenticeship as skill benchmarks are attained by apprentices. Progressive wage increases help reward and motivate apprentices as they advance through their training.



National Occupational Credential.

Every graduate of a Registered Apprenticeship program receives a nationally-recognized credential. As you build the program, keep in mind that apprenticeship programs are designed to ensure that apprentices master every skill and have all the knowledge needed to be fully proficient for a specific occupation.