



**Apprenticeship:
It Makes Good
Business Sense**





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The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, and the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council are pleased to provide you with this employer toolkit. It is designed to give you what you need to know about apprenticeship—what it is and how it benefits your business. You will learn how apprenticeship works and how it can affect your bottom line.

Tools and resources are available to get your company started training apprentices. This toolkit was designed to answer some of the most common questions about apprenticeship.

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A message from the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council

If you own or manage a business, you make investment decisions every day. Some of the major decisions include investing in space (office space, warehouse, shop space, production space, work space, or retail space), investing in material, raw materials, product, or supplies, and investing in your equipment. These are all tangible investments. They can all be touched, felt, and seen.

There is another kind of investment that companies make. It is called the “human investment.” Successful companies realize that their employees are one of their most valuable assets. Your workforce has to be a positive reflection of your company. Organizations that train tend to thrive, even in the face of strong competition. If your business and Wisconsin’s economy is going to grow, it is important to develop a skilled workforce.

Wisconsin’s apprenticeship program is a resource you can utilize to insure that your company operates at peak efficiency. Apprenticeship is a time-honored training system that involves a combination of classroom and on the job training under the direction of a skilled worker. Training apprentices is the best way to guarantee that your employees are trained in industry accepted practices as well as in specific techniques and methods employed by your company.

To assist you in making a decision to invest in your workforce, here are three reasons that companies train apprentices:

Productivity What if everyone in your company was either in apprenticeship training or had completed an apprenticeship? It is a simple fact that a person who is properly trained is far more productive than someone who has not been trained.

Classroom Instruction + On the Job Training = Increased Productivity.

Retention There have been a number of studies that have shown that employees who are properly trained tend to stay working for the same employer longer. In addition, they use fewer sick days. One of the reasons is the difference between working in a job and having a career. In general, those who are in careers tend to stay with their employers.

Quality The apprenticeship training process instills a sense of pride. The training environment in both the classroom and in the field dictates that it is simply not acceptable to “slap things together.” This “learned attitude” increases the overall standard of quality.

Companies that offer apprenticeship training opportunities often attract higher quality job applicants. The person who wants to serve an apprenticeship is one who is willing to make a commitment to their career and to your company.

It all comes down to a willingness to invest in your most valuable resource—your employees. Training apprentices is one of the best ways to accomplish this investment. If you empower your employees through training, you will see direct benefits. Take the first step and find out more about how you can make the apprenticeship training process work for you.



What is Apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship method of training—with a skilled worker passing on craft knowledge to another is almost as old as recorded history.

Since the middle ages, skills have been passed on through a master-apprentice system in which the apprentice was indentured (contracted) to the master for a specified period of years. The apprentice usually received food, shelter, and clothing in return for the work the apprentice performed while under the apprentice indenture (contract). The indenture was a legally binding document, but there was no oversight or regulation of the indenture.

Apprenticeship in the U.S. continued as an unregulated system until 1911, when Wisconsin passed the country's first apprenticeship law. With safeguards for both the apprentice and the employer, Wisconsin's law became a model for the other states and for the federal government in developing their own systems. Also, in 1911, the Wisconsin legislature established the state's vocational school system to provide the related classroom instruction to apprentices. From 1911 to present day, thousands of apprentices have gone through the system and have contributed to the state's economy.

Eight Essential Components of Apprenticeship Training

1. **Structured Training** Apprenticeship is a training strategy that:
 - ✚ combines supervised, structured on-the job training with related instruction
 - ✚ is sponsored by employers, employer associations or labor/management groups that have the ability to hire and train in a working environment. The employment opportunity is the most basic requirement for any apprenticeship. Without the job, there is no on the job training. On the job training represents approximately 90% of the program.
 - ✚ provides quality related instruction. Related instruction is theoretical and technical, and it is usually provided by the Wisconsin Technical College System or a training center. Related Instruction is a key part of each apprenticeship and it is required by Apprenticeship law. The requirement is that there needs to be 144 hours of related instruction per year if a program runs for two years or less and a minimum of 400 hours if the apprenticeship is three or more years.
2. **Skilled Training** Apprenticeship is a training strategy that prepares people for skilled employment by conducting training in bona fide and documented employment settings. The content of training, both on-the-job and related instruction, is defined by the industry.

In Wisconsin, we use state apprenticeship trade advisory committees and an apprenticeship advisory council. The purpose of the committees is to formulate minimum state standards for each trade and to make recommendations to the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards.

Members of the state committees are made up of an equal number of labor and management members who are from industries involved in actively training apprentices.



3. **Apprenticeship Laws** Apprenticeship is a training strategy with requirements that are clearly stated in Federal and State laws and regulations. The National Apprenticeship Act of 1937 (also known as the Fitzgerald Act) provides the guidance from the federal level. Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 106 provides additional state requirements. These laws and regulations establish minimum requirements for protecting the welfare of the apprentice, such as:
 - a. the length of training,
 - b. type and amount of related instruction
 - c. supervision of the apprentice
 - d. appropriate ratios of apprentices to journey workers
 - e. apprentice selection and recruitment procedures, etc.

4. **Credentials** Apprenticeship is a training strategy that by virtue of a legal contract leads to a certificate of completion and official/recognized journey worker status. The contracts and completion certificates are issued by the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards. These credentials have explicit meaning, recognition, and respect in the eyes of federal and state governments and relevant industries.

Also required is the approval and monitoring of the program by the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards. When employers desire to start or modify an apprentice program, they are provided technical assistance by the Bureau.

5. **Investment in Training** Apprenticeship is a training strategy that involves a tangible investment on the part of the apprentice, program sponsor, individual employer or labor/management group. The apprentice's investment is the time to learn skills and to perfect those skills on the job. The apprentice is expected to manage their time, keep their work records, attend classes, and to progress in their apprenticeship program. The apprentice may also be required to pay for tuition or books. The employer's investment includes paying wages while the apprentice is in related instruction and the wages of the skilled worker while training the apprentice on the job.

6. **Earn and Learn** Apprenticeship is a training strategy that pays wages to apprentices during the term of their apprenticeship. These wages are a portion of the skilled wage rate that increases throughout the training program in accordance with a predetermined wage scale. The wages must average 60% over the term of the apprenticeship and must not be less than minimum wage.

7. **Supervised Training** Apprenticeship is a training strategy in which participants learn by working directly under the supervision of skilled workers in the craft, trade or occupational areas.

8. **Apprentice Contract** Apprenticeship is a training strategy that involves a written agreement, or contract between the apprentice, the employer, and the state. This agreement specifies the length of the training, the related school requirements, an outline of the skills of the trade to be learned, and the wages the apprentice will receive.



Benefits of Training Apprentices

Your company needs to be ready to compete in the 21st Century. By training apprentices you will gain employees who will make a contribution to your bottom line. Apprenticeship training is a key investment in your company's future. Following are some of the key benefits of training apprentices:

- ✚ **Apprenticeship equals trained employees:** By combining on-the-job training with classroom instruction, Apprenticeship provides an employer with fully-trained employees. It creates better skilled workers for your company by providing skill training and job-related theory to meet your company's needs. Participating in an apprenticeship program ensures that you will have employees that are trained to industry standards, as well as to your company's.
- ✚ **Apprenticeship means less turnover** Invest in your employees and they will invest in you. When you commit to training your workforce you will see employee motivation increase, improvements in overall work ethics, and increased employee loyalty. Training apprentices in your business creates skilled and experienced employees, many of whom will stay with you for the long term.
- ✚ **Apprenticeship saves you money** Although you pay for apprenticeship training, the actual cost to you is minimal. The program includes both classroom and on-the-job training, so apprentices will be producing for you while they learn. The result is employees ready to contribute to your bottom line. Also, if your business is in a field requiring licensing, when your employees finish the program, they are prepared for the exam.
- ✚ **Apprenticeship improves productivity** The completion of an apprenticeship program results in highly trained professionals who contribute noticeably to your bottom line and ensures a high level of quality production. Their knowledge, skills, and on the job experience enables them to develop a thorough understanding of your business needs and how best to meet them.
- ✚ **Apprenticeship helps you provide career opportunities** The apprenticeship program is the best way to train qualified individuals by providing career opportunities and trained people in your industry. This means you will have trained employees when you need them. It will also raise the overall status of your industry.
- ✚ **Apprenticeship helps you plan for the future** According to the Department of Workforce Development, by the year 2012, Wisconsin will be experiencing a "significant labor shortage as the number of people turning sixty-five, fueled by the aging of the "Baby Boomer" generation surpasses the number of people turning eighteen due to low birth rates and slowing migration patterns. Consequently, the number of workers entering the labor force will not be sufficient to replace those ending their working careers."

Implementing an apprenticeship program in your business will assist you to be better able to plan and meet your future workforce needs, ensuring that you have a pool of experienced employees of different ages within your company.



Tips to a Successful Apprenticeship Program

Here are some tips to consider when implementing your apprenticeship program.

Employers with a solid record of completing apprentices typically conduct a thorough recruitment and assessment of candidates to ensure that the apprentice will adapt successfully to your company and will remain with the business.

Make good selections when hiring apprentices by taking your time when evaluating potential apprentices.

Apprentices are an important part of your business. They are motivated when they feel they are treated with respect.

Clearly identify your training objectives. Review the apprentice contract with them to develop a basic understanding of your expectations and skill requirements.

Communicate regularly with the skilled worker(s) and the apprentice to ensure that an appropriate level of supervision and training is taking place. As the apprentice progresses in the occupation/trade, he/she will develop more confidence and will require less supervision.

Conduct regular performance reviews. Offer new challenges and if possible, vary the job duties to ensure well rounded training. This will enable your apprentice to stay interested in the work. It will also increase the overall skill base of the company.

Remind your supervisors and those who schedule your workforce, that apprentices must be released from work to attend related classroom instruction.

Educate your staff concerning the value of training and the importance of having apprentices on the job site. Fostering a positive working environment where apprentices feel appreciated by the company and by their peers will increase employee retention, thereby reducing future hiring and training costs.

Demonstrate your commitment to training by visibly displaying training certificates and providing recognition for excellent employees.



Valuable Tips for Effective Mentoring Techniques

A Guide for Journey Workers and Front-Line Supervisors

Getting the job done right requires a person to use their head as well as their hands. But if your apprentices are not receiving quality on-the-job training they won't become the skilled employees you need. Effective applied training techniques help make the apprentice become more proficient and self-reliant. Here are a few mentoring skills that will make a difference when you train apprentices:

Time Management: Time management means more than establishing priorities and delegating specific tasks. Time management should be a primary concern for the mentor. It is an important part of the apprentice's training to realize that there's always a dynamic tension between accomplishing a job with speed while maintaining a standard of quality workmanship. Good time management skills include:

- ✚ Ability to clarify priorities
- ✚ Ability to eliminate time wasters
- ✚ Ability to structure the day
- ✚ Ability to overcome procrastination
- ✚ Ability to control the details
- ✚ Ability to focus on results

Understand the Role of the Apprentice: The mentor must understand the role of the apprentice. Apprentices are learners. The supervisor must:

- ✚ Recognize the skill level of the apprentice
- ✚ Recognize the learning style of the apprentice
- ✚ Establish skill level advancement, so the apprentice knows how to reach the next step
- ✚ Explain the trade language, including tools and processes

The Supervisor must be able to serve as a Mentor: The word, "mentor," originated in Greek mythology. A man named Mentor was entrusted with the family and the possessions of Odysseus who was fighting in the Trojan War. Because of the trustworthy job Mentor did, the word "mentor" has come to mean a knowledgeable and dependable person who takes a direct and personal interest in helping another person.



Mentoring is a partnership based on mutual respect with both parties contributing to the discussion as equals working together. The mentor still may have more experience, insight, or wisdom, but the relationship is one of sharing and teaching.

The mentor's role includes:

- ✚ Explaining the expectations of the employer
- ✚ Explaining the expectations of coworkers
- ✚ Explaining what the apprentice can expect from the employer
- ✚ Listening to the concerns of the apprentice
- ✚ Explaining the working relationship between the trades
- ✚ Making the apprentice aware of all safety aspects of the job

Summary: Apprentices learn by doing. Apprenticeship training is 10% classroom instruction and is 90% on-the-job training. Good apprenticeship training takes planning and requires that a supervisor/mentor be responsible for that planning.

The apprenticeship mentor must take the time to be intentional about planning work activities for the apprentice in order for the apprentice to obtain the well rounded skills he or she expected to receive when they signed the apprentice training contract. With practice, the proper attitude, and common sense, the supervisor can become the mentor.

The result will be better on the job training, more proficient employees, happier customers, and a healthier bottom line.



Getting Started

How to implement an apprenticeship program in your company

Making the apprenticeship program a part of your company's training strategy is a lot easier than you may think. Here is a step-by-step guide to help you on your way to making apprenticeship support the success of your business.

Assess the needs of your business. To begin, clearly define your company's training needs and what role an apprentice could play within your business. If appropriate, organize an internal apprenticeship advisory group. This should include production supervisors, personnel staff, craft supervisors, and skilled workers. It is also important to identify a journey worker who is capable and who is committed to training new workers to meet your standards and business requirements.

Identify skill needs. Determine what knowledge and skills are needed for the occupation to be included in the program.

Contact your local apprenticeship office. Contact your local Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards apprenticeship training representative. He/she will make an on-site visit and work with you to determine appropriate job titles and the training schedule.

Develop minimum standards. Standards for the program need to be developed. Standards for existing apprenticeship program have already been established. Minimum standards include:

- ✚ Starting age of an apprentice to be not less than 18.
- ✚ Equal opportunity to apply for an apprenticeship.
- ✚ Selection of apprentices on the basis of qualifications.
- ✚ A schedule of work processes in which an apprentice is to receive training and experience on the job.
- ✚ Paid related instruction designed to provide the apprentice with knowledge in technical subjects related to the occupation/trade for a minimum of 144 hours per year and a minimum of 400 hours for a program of three or more years.
- ✚ A progressively increasing schedule of wages.
- ✚ Proper supervision of on-the-job training with adequate facilities to train apprentices.
- ✚ Periodic evaluation of the apprentice's progress, both on-the-job and in related instruction.
- ✚ The maintenance of records.
- ✚ Employer-employee cooperation.
- ✚ Recognition for successful completions.
- ✚ Nondiscrimination in all phases of apprenticeship.



Basic Provisions

Following is a guide to the provisions that should be part of any apprenticeship program:

Occupations:

Determine what occupations or types of jobs will be covered by the program. Contact your apprenticeship training representative for more information.

Work Processes:

List the major on-the-job training processes for each occupation separately. Traditional occupations have standard recommended work processes. Contact your BAS representative for more information.

Allocation of work training time:

Determine the number of hours for each work process. This is the time an apprentice is expected to work on the process to become proficient. Traditional occupations have previously established minimum hours.

Term of apprenticeship:

In most traditionally apprenticeable occupations, the term of apprenticeship has been established. Your apprenticeship training representative can assist you.

Apprentice Qualifications:

What qualifications will applicants need to enter your program? These should be clear and objective; equal opportunity should be stressed. Most occupations have existing minimum qualifications.

Related Classroom Instruction:

Each apprentice must attend paid related instruction: 144 hours per year if a program runs for two years or less and a minimum of 400 hours if the apprenticeship is three or more years.

Number of Apprentices:

The number of apprentices to be trained is usually determined by a ratio of apprentices to skilled workers. Such a ratio is based on your industry's guidelines. Minimum ratios are established for those occupations that are overseen by state committees.

Apprentice Wages:

There must be a progressive schedule for wage increases for the term of the contract that averages 60% of the skilled worker rate for the duration of the apprenticeship program. Your apprenticeship training representative can assist you.

Supervision of Apprentices:

Apprentices are customarily under the immediate supervision of an assigned skilled worker. In large apprenticeship programs, an apprentice supervisor or training coordinator is designated or employed on a part or full time basis and is responsible for administering the program. In small programs, this responsibility is basically that of the employer.



Apprentice Contract:

A fundamental part of the Wisconsin Apprenticeship System is the agreement (contract) between the employer and apprentice. This contract must be approved by the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards.

Hire an apprentice.

When you are ready to start training a new apprentice, remember to look to promote from within. This will assist in building loyalty at your company and will provide you with an opportunity to “grow your own” skilled workers.

Monitor your apprentice’s progress.

Systematically track your apprentice’s on-the-job training hours and make sure that they are developing the skills they need to meet the trade specific work processes and training standards.



Roles and Responsibilities

A successful apprenticeship relies on the full support of several partners; the apprentice, the apprenticeship sponsor (employer), the local apprenticeship advisory committee (construction only), the state and the Wisconsin Technical College System.

Employer Responsibilities

1. Provide the apprentice with on-the-job training supervised by a skilled journey worker.
2. Maintain a work environment that is conducive to learning and offer the apprentice a safe place to work with proper equipment.
3. Provide well-rounded training so the apprentice learns all aspects of the trade by the completion of the training program.
4. Monitor the apprentice's on-the-job progress and provide feedback on performance.
5. Pay the appropriate apprentice wages.
6. Arrange to PAY the apprentice wages while attending related instruction and pay wages while he/she is attending.
7. Keep accurate records of the on-the-job training. You will be required to notify the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards when the apprentice completes all program requirements so these records are very important.
8. Comply with provisions of the apprentice contract
9. Notify the Bureau if:
 - a. There are changes at your company which could affect the ability to provide on-the-job training or supervision.
 - b. Your company relocates or changes its mailing address.
 - c. The apprentice leaves.

Apprentice Responsibilities

1. Work safely, not just for personal safety, but for that of co-workers.
2. Avoid absenteeism and tardiness at work and at school.
3. Attend and participate in related instruction and maintain the good grades.
4. Show dedication and interest in learning the occupation/trade.
5. Keep track of training hours and advise the employer of any deficiencies in apprenticeship training.
6. Follow the employer's work rules and policies.
7. Comply with provisions of the apprentice contract

Bureau of Apprentice Standards Responsibilities

1. Register and monitor programs to ensure conformity to state standards, laws, rules, and policies.
2. Review employers and apprentices.
3. Assist apprentices and employers with questions or concerns.
4. Provide technical assistance.
5. Confer with the providers of related instruction to assure quality classroom training.
6. Maintain equal opportunity and affirmative action compliance.



DIRECTORY OF BUREAU OF APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS TRAINING REPRESENTATIVES

A key source of information about apprentices is the Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards local staff who are responsible for the providing information and assistance regarding the apprenticeship Program.

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Additional resources and information,
including employer testimonials,
can be found at the following Website:
<http://wisconsinapprenticeship.org/appr/contacts.htm>
