OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE LIFT NETWORK
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM MODEL:

The LIFT Network Registered Apprenticeship Program serves as an advanced industry and manufacturing sector focused work-and-learn, adult training program – as well as a signature workforce development initiative of the LIFT Network. The program leverages the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Registered Apprenticeship Program model, which serves as the “gold standard” model of apprenticeship programs, signaling quality and rigor via the registration under the USDOL and the awarding of a national USDOL certification of completion upon the culmination of the program. The South Bend – Elkhart Regional Partnership and the Northern Indiana Workforce Board serve as the co-lead organizations of the LIFT Network Apprenticeship Program. Programs are registered under the Northern Indiana Workforce Board to provide capacity and sustainability support for all LIFT Network Apprenticeship employer partners related to the design and development, through implementation and success management of programs. The South Bend – Elkhart Regional Partnership is the overall program administrator, both managing the engagement of employer partners, as well as the overall LIFT Network training funds. Through a $1.1M training fund, the program subsidizes the initial costs of LIFT Network Apprenticeship programs between $2,500 to $5,000 per apprentice at up to 3 apprentices per company.

ABOUT THE LABS FOR INDUSTRY FUTURES
AND TRANSFORMATION (LIFT) NETWORK:

The Labs for Industry Futures and Transformation (LIFT) Network was established to formally connect and enhance the South Bend - Elkhart region’s innovation, R&D, workforce training, and educational assets and resources to support industry advancement. Collectively, the network and its programs support the South Bend - Elkhart region’s transformation to an increasingly digital and automated future, enhancing the current manufacturing base with new business models, technologies and tailored workforce training programs while accelerating new high-tech sector growth in the region. For more information about the LIFT Network, visit liftsbe.org.

The LIFT Network and the associated iNDustry Labs at Notre Dame were catalyzed by a $42.4 million grant awarded to the University of Notre Dame in 2019 from Lilly Endowment Inc. The grant supports Notre Dame’s partnership with the South Bend - Elkhart Regional Partnership in establishing and advancing the LIFT Network.
The LIFT Network collaborates with Local Economic Development Organizations to identify prospective companies as the firms explore business expansion opportunities within the region. In many cases, company expansion results in industry advancement activities that require the re-training and/or training of new frontline, technical workers within occupations that enable automation, digital transformation and other digital operating practices.

Any employers interested in learning more about the LIFT Network Apprenticeship Program may reach out to Leighton Johnson (LIFT Network Apprenticeship Program Project Director) via email at Ljohnson@southbendelkhart.org.
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PHASE I

IDENTIFY TRAINING NEEDS
OVERVIEW

The first step that your company should take in developing an apprenticeship program is to identify the training needs for the company. Your company should key in on the specific occupation and skills required for the job.

Typically, skilled roles that require some type of postsecondary training within vocational and technical training environments show high demand across Advanced Industry & Manufacturing firms. These occupations are also hard to fill for companies, as many technical, skilled roles remain open for long periods of time until a company is able to fill the position with a qualified individual.

EXAMPLE

Company X recently purchased new, automated production equipment which automate several production tasks, but now requires frontline workers to operate the equipment with program codes such as Programming Logic Control (PLC) language. With previous production practices, Company X was able to hire production Assemblers and Fabricators that completed very manual tasks, but with many of those tasks now automated, the company must re-train incumbent workers and/or hire new Robotic Technicians that will carry out programming and robotic equipment operating work tasks.

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Identify the specific occupation.

Obtain any existing job descriptions that document the work functions and skills of the occupation.

If a job description does exist, outline the key work functions and required skills of the occupation and ensure that currently needed functions and skills align with the existing job description, document any additional work functions and skills that are necessary.

If an existing job description does not exist, move to next step.

Identify the total number of positions that the company plans to fill for this role, designating by shift as well.

Identify the pay scale for the occupation.

Identify the equipment sets and necessary industry-specific skills required to operate equipment or full work functions of the role.

Identify any currently existing or previous training programs and or postsecondary partnerships that the company enacted to train workers within the specific occupation during prior years. Document the successes and challenges of those previous training programs and partnerships.
LIFT NETWORK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

The LIFT Network Apprenticeship Design Team will utilize the information gathered during Phase I to 1.) support the development of a customized training plan for the Apprenticeship Program and 2.) identify third-party training options for the Apprenticeship Program. Various options exist ranging from credit-based and noncredit-based programs within regional training institutions such as Ivy Tech Community College, South Bend – Elkhart; Purdue Polytechnic Institute, South Bend and the Recreational Vehicle Training Institute. Additionally, the LIFT Network will help companies identify industry recognized certifications that companies may train workers towards such as the American Welding Society (AWS), National Institute for Metal Working Skills (NIMS), the Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA) and more.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM KEY ROLES

Once the training needs are well defined, the next step is to identify and define roles for internal staff related to the Apprenticeship Program. There are three key support functions to successfully design and implement Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

PROGRAM CHAMPION

This role is an executive level staff member of the company, typically a CEO/President, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Human Resources Officer or another executive leadership level position. This role is critical to ensure that company leadership is in support of the Registered Apprenticeship Program and the hurdles are addressed within an executive function of the company. The Program Champion is involved at a very high-level, understanding the purpose and key deliverables of the Registered Apprenticeship Program, but isn't involved in the day-to-day operations.
02

**SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT**

This role is a senior level staff member who is critical in designing the Registered Apprenticeship Program training plan and other associated U.S. Department of Labor Standards of Apprenticeship documents. Typically, this role is a Director of Engineering, Production Manager, Maintenance Manager or any other role that involves establishing production/operating standards for work functions of the company.

03

**PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

This role is typically a human resources or training & development role within a company. The Program Coordinator is the internal staff member at the company responsible for managing internal documentation of the apprenticeship program and managing overall processes for the program. The coordinator may work with third-party training providers to enroll apprentices within classes for the apprenticeship, document wage progressions and more.
PHASE II

Design Registered Apprenticeship Training Plan
OVERVIEW

The next step in developing a Registered Apprenticeship Program, regarded by many companies that currently deploy programs as the most time intensive, is the design and development of the training plan.

This crucial activity aligns the key work functions and tasks for an occupation with the requested training, both on-the-job and through what is called Related Training Instruction, or the delivery of training instruction either in-house or by a third-party education training provider. In addition to documenting key work functions and job tasks, your company will also establish a wage progression scale that will be documented within the overall training plan.

EXAMPLE

Company Z has updated job descriptions for two types of CNC Machinist roles, one focused on standard machining functions such as turning and lathing, and the other focused on gear specific machining functions such as hobbing, shaving and shaping. Company Z would like to create a comprehensive Registered Apprenticeship Program that incorporates key work functions and skills for both job descriptions, so the Human Resource Team works with subject matter experts such as the Director of Engineering and other engineering managers to provide inputs on the training plan design. The final product is a comprehensive, two-year training plan that incorporates on-the-job training functions as well as aligns with Related Training Instruction from the American Association of Gear Manufacturing and Ivy Tech Community College, South Bend – Elkhart.
ACTION ITEM CHECKLIST

Identify Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) associated with the occupations that the apprenticeship program is designed for. The SMEs will provide guidance in designing the overall training plan.

Review existing job descriptions, position training plans, and any existing skill matrices pertaining to the occupation that the Registered Apprenticeship Program is being designed for.

Review the U.S. Department of Labor Standards of Apprenticeship template documents to familiarize your company with required documentation for facilitating a Registered Apprenticeship Program.

Outline and input On-the-Job Learning (OJT) work functions and job tasks within the LIFT Network Apprenticeship Training Plan Form.

Determine a wage progression scale and insert within the LIFT Network Training Plan Template Training Form as well.

LIFT NETWORK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

The LIFT Network Apprenticeship Design Team will utilize information gathered during Phase II to establish training competencies that will populate information within Appendix A of the Standards of Apprenticeship Document.
PHASE III

Establish Related Training Instruction Agreement & Plan
This phase introduces activities related to the development of education and technical training plan design elements of the Apprenticeship Program, which are formally referred to as the Related Training Instruction section of the training plan.

Companies may collaborate with postsecondary institutions and operating technical schools. The LIFT Network has identified a set of high-quality training providers to aid in developing key Related Training Instruction for the overall Apprenticeship Program. Related Training Instruction may vary from credit and/or non-credit based courses.

EXAMPLE

Company Y plans to develop a Welding Technician (Robotics Technology focus) Apprenticeship Program that incorporates a 34-credit based Technical Certification with the Industrial Technology Program at Ivy Tech Community College with a concentration in Welding Technology and additional key courses that focus on industrial robotics and programming. While the program may result in a Technical Certification from Ivy Tech Community College, the program will also embed industry recognized certifications from the American Welding Society such as the Certified Robotic Arc Welding certification.
ACTION ITEM CHECKLIST

- Review Technical Certification Curriculum from the Related Training Instruction provider specifically related to the Apprenticeship Program Training Plan. Identify program elements that your company would like to include within Related Training Instruction courses.

- Communicate specific courses that your company would like to include within your Apprenticeship Program overall.

- Review full cost of Related Training Instruction, including course credit costs, institutional fees, and all other related fees such as technology and semester fees.

- Approve overall estimated costs of the total Related Training Instruction for the entirety of the Apprenticeship Program.

- Establish a master training plan matrix, providing a high-level overview of both On-the-Job Training and Related Training Instruction activity schedules.

LIFT NETWORK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

The LIFT Network will initiate meetings between your company and the education/training institution to review both the Appendix A Training Plan and associated curriculum/course materials from the training provider.
PHASE IV

Recruit Apprentices to Program
OVERVIEW

With the Apprenticeship Program submitted and/or registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, your company may now begin recruiting apprentices to the program.

Your company should first determine the total number of apprentices that will be onboarded for the first cohort of your apprenticeship program. After determining the total number of apprentices to be onboarded, your company will then plan whether your recruitment will be of incumbent workers, external candidates who would then become full-time employees, or a mixture of both types of recruitment. The recruitment format that requires the least amount of time is targeting incumbent workers. Many employers prefer to recruit incumbent workers, especially for the initial cohorts of a program as your company will already know whether the employees meet the desired non-technical skills required and possess traits such as work ethic and timeliness that would also be key. If your company determines that an approach for external recruitment is desired, it would then require for your company to post the apprenticeship program as a job posting. Once your company determines a plan to move forward with recruitment the LIFT Network would then be able to support with planning for recruitment and onboarding.

EXAMPLE

Company Z plans to engage a hybrid form of recruitment for the apprenticeship program. With a plan to onboard 4 apprentices in cohort 1, the company would like to enroll 2 incumbent workers in the program and 2 new hires in the program. The company sends out an internal email to all staff inviting them to apply for the apprenticeship program internally and also puts up flyers in the breakroom to raise awareness about the opportunity. Parallel to promoting the apprenticeship program internally, the Human Resources Department will also post the opportunity on the company website and on public job search boards across the region. Job seekers would have the opportunity to learn about the apprenticeship opportunity and interview with the company to identify if the program is an ideal fit. The external candidates would be hired full-time to the company and serve as full employees, while also enrolling as Registered Apprentices within the apprenticeship program.
ACTION ITEM CHECKLIST

- Determine your company’s recruitment plan of incumbent workers and/or external candidates.

- Develop an internal recruitment information sheet and share across employee information channels (for internal recruitment).

- Post the apprenticeship on your company’s job board and on external job boards such as Indeed, Indiana Career Connect, and more (for external recruitment).

- Request the collaboration of community partners to host hiring fairs via the Northern Indiana Workforce Board and other partners. Also share job postings with Career & Technical Education providers to share opportunities with current students of programs.

- Interview internal and external candidates for the apprenticeship cohort and make determination of program acceptance.

- Submit list of approved apprentice candidates to the LIFT Network to advance to the next Phase of program development.

- Schedule for apprentices to complete their academic assessment tests for Math and English requirements, respectively.

- Coordinate with the LIFT Network Apprenticeship Coordinator to input apprentice identification information within necessary U.S. Department of Labor database.
LIFT NETWORK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

While the deliverables and activities of this phase largely are the responsibility of your company to complete, the LIFT Network is available to provide any resources or information that may be helpful. Upon reviewing the action item checklist, please reach out to the LIFT Network for guidance.

One critical process step to keep in mind, however, is partnering with the Apprenticeship Program’s Related Training Instruction provider to discuss expectations on pre-course enrollment assessments to measure baseline competencies in Math and English. This step is often required by postsecondary institutions to ensure that apprentices have the baseline skills to be able to keep up with the rigor of a class and assignments. Your company will send a list of apprentices and contact information for the Human Resources scheduling point of contact at the company and the institution will then coordinate the scheduling of pre-assessments and will keep your company informed of progress.

Once the pre-enrollment assessments are completed, the postsecondary partner will notify the employer and apprentices. Should an apprentice candidate not pass a specific assessment test with a satisfactory score, the postsecondary institution would provide some “refresher” learning materials to help the apprentice relearn a few key areas and re-test. Once the apprentice candidates complete the necessary assessments, they will be ready to enroll and start courses.
Launched Program
OVERVIEW

Now that your company has identified the apprentice candidates and have a fully registered program through the Northern Indiana Workforce Board and U.S. Department of Labor, it is now time to enroll apprentices for courses and fully launch the program.

Your company may be confident that the apprentices are ready and have the ability to succeed in their academic courses.

It is now time to begin the apprentice and company enrollment processes for Related Training Instruction. The postsecondary institutional partner will work with your company to complete all required company registration activities to launch the Related Training Instruction side of the program. At this stage, your company will review the work schedule of the apprentices to align their class schedule and match up to appropriate times for course instruction. Parallel to registering students for courses, your company may begin OSHA training with your insurance provider (a common practice for apprenticeship programs) to kick-off the initial training competencies which are often OSHA/Safety training to provide a solid foundation for the apprentices.

Once training is running and apprentices are fully enrolled in courses, your company will also finalize a success coaching plan that will be defined further in Phase VI to ensure that mentorship and academic success coaching is taking place.
ACTION ITEM CHECKLIST

Upon completion of assessments, schedule OSHA training to begin the overall training for the Apprenticeship Program. This training may be delivered by the insurance provider for your firm.

Schedule and determine course times that enable adequate instruction time that fits the overall work schedule of the apprentice.

Set up a meeting and schedule success coaching check-in meetings on at least a quarterly basis between the Northern Indiana Workforce Board Apprenticeship Case Manager and the Apprenticeship Program point of contact at your company.

Release any marketing or promotion of the Apprenticeship Program and its launch within your company.

LIFT NETWORK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

This step is largely an administrative process to follow through on process items established within the Apprenticeship Program Appendix A document. It is the role of the company to ensure that apprentices are following through on completing necessary academic requirements for registration and course enrollment.
PHASE VI

Implement & Manage Success
OVERVIEW

As the final phase of Apprenticeship Program development and implementation, activities tied to success management are often overlooked during the launch of Apprenticeship Programs.

It is essential to establish a firm implementation and success management plan to ensure that apprentices within the program are successfully persisting through, and any future challenges are addressed within appropriate means. The Northern Indiana Workforce Board has structured capacity support to establish success management plans with your company and provide coaching/technical assistance throughout the duration of the Apprenticeship Program. Areas to be addressed can range from supporting apprentices with time management and studying skills – as many apprentices may not have taken an academic course in 10+ years prior to starting the Apprenticeship Program – to ensuring that apprentices are not required to work overtime hours during weeks where they are prepping for industry certification tests and final exams.
ACTION ITEM CHECKLIST

- Develop a training matrix and calendar which highlights the training competencies and course schedule for apprentices, to allow for progress tracking throughout the apprenticeship program.

- Finalize a standing success management check-in meeting between the Apprenticeship Program point of contact and the NIWB Apprenticeship Case Manager.

- Establish recognition awards – i.e. gift cards, etc – to acknowledge the completion of milestones/accomplishments for apprentices as they persist through the program.

- Ensure Human Resources is prepared to provide wage increase – consistent with the U.S. Department of Labor Standards of Apprenticeship documents – at each quarterly completion of the Apprenticeship Program for apprentices.

LIFT NETWORK APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROCESS

The Northern Indiana Workforce Board will establish success coaching check-ins on at least a quarterly basis, in which Apprenticeship Program Case Managers will work directly through the company Apprenticeship Program point of contact to monitor success of the apprentices. The Case Managers will forecast forthcoming activities of the program and ensure that the company is aware of any education related activities that may implicate the time of the apprentice. The company will also report on quarterly wage increases based on apprentice completion of milestones within the program.
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