

## ***Guidelines for a Successful Apprentice Program***

Thank you for considering participating in the FloridaMakes Advanced Manufacturing Apprentices Program for the Industrial Manufacturing Technician!

It is our mission to serve our manufacturers and provide programs to develop skilled talent to increase the economic stability and growth of a company with skilled talent. The Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) Apprentices Program was inspired by the FloridaMakes Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Leadership Council. Employers recognize the need to grow talent internally that meets their company's specific skill sets. Traditional apprenticeship programs, while highly regarded, often experience low participation due to offering evening classroom training at local colleges or vocational schools. Many of today's workers must balance work-life responsibilities of family, transportation, and personal time to continue on with education. This program answers the need of both employer and motivated employees who will see this program as an opportunity **that offers flexibility** and on-ramp to a highly rewarding career path in advanced manufacturing. This hybrid learning platform offers the required technical education bypassing the need for employees to attend courses at institutions and provides flexible access for students with lifestyles, work schedules, and geographical barriers that often prohibit participation in traditional "in-class" offerings.

**Administrative Note:** We strongly suggest before you move forward that your team including the HR Director, apprentice and the mentor have a formal meeting to review and discuss:

- The Standards for the IMT Apprentices Program
- A training plan
- The expectations of the participants

Should you decide to move forward with the program, notify your FloridaMakes Business Advisor or email [talentdevelopment@floridamakes.com](mailto:talentdevelopment@floridamakes.com) and we will take the next step of sending the Enrollment Packet to get started.

### ***Value of MSSC Certification from the Worker Perspective***

FloridaMakes partnered with the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), a nationally recognized industry-led training, assessment and certification organization focused on the core technical competencies needed by the nation's frontline production and material handling workers. The nationwide MSSC certifications, based upon industry-defined and

federally-endorsed national standards, offer both entry-level and incumbent workers the opportunity to demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge and skills increasingly needed in the technology-intensive advanced manufacturing and logistics jobs of the 21st century. MSSC certification applies to all frontline manufacturing production jobs (6 million) and all front-line material handling and distribution jobs (6.1 million).

MSSC has developed the Certified Production Technician (CPT) nationally portable certifications for this workforce:

The CPT curriculum addresses the core technical competencies of higher skilled production workers in all sectors of manufacturing. Individuals who pass all four program Modules: Safety, Quality Practices & Measurement, Manufacturing Processes & Production, Maintenance Awareness will receive a national CPT Certification to those who pass all four core modules (Note: Green is not required for full-CPT certification.) The Amatrol eLearning platform that you will use to login for your virtual training is the same curriculum and learning system used throughout Florida's Career and Technical Education Certified Production Technician courses in high schools, vocational schools and state colleges.

### ***IMT for Apprentices***

Today, many young workers struggle to attain the education and work experience they need to land a good job with a career path. Many experienced frontline workers are shut off from career opportunities because they do not have the training or credentials required to advance to more specialized, technical occupations. The IMT Apprenticeship Program was designed with these challenges in mind in which IMT apprentices are frontline workers in advanced manufacturing settings who earn while they learn. IMT apprentices are preparing to take on professional roles in the advanced manufacturing sector, and they are afforded new opportunities while working and earning a living wage.

### ***How It Work***

This apprenticeship program is a competency-based hybrid program with a combination of on-the-job training and online classes. Apprentices spend much of their day working under the guidance of a journey worker who guides on-the-job-learning in the critical manufacturing work processes and related tasks. In addition, apprentices participate in formal self-online education and assessments that help them to attain valuable advanced manufacturing certifications, which they can use to advance both their education and career.

This is a serious time commitment to study approximately 4-6 hours each week, on off-hours to complete 200 hours of online courses. Apprentices are enrolled in the Amatrol eLearning system where the courses are accessed via laptop, tablet or personal computer. The advantage to this program is that it gives flexibility to the apprentice's schedule and there is no need to travel or sit in a traditional classroom that may be far from your home.

Apprentices must maintain a work record of actual hours worked. During the 2,000 hours of on-the-job mentored training the apprentice will participate in regular assessments with their mentor providing curriculum support and feedback on their job performance. Apprentices who embrace this feedback will experience significant learning and personal development and they will also advance in their career.

At the completion of the IMT apprenticeship program, the apprentice will receive a state of Florida issued, nationally recognized Industrial Manufacturing Technician Certification. Apprentices are encouraged but not required to take proctored assessment testing to earn additional national certifications relevant to the program. The IMT Program is eligible for a Certified Production Technician Certification.

### ***IMT for Employers***

Many manufacturing employers report facing skills shortages. Employers who want a pipeline of skilled workers, customized skills training for workers, increased retention, increased productivity, and a positive return on their investments may consider the IMT apprenticeship

### ***How It Works***

Employers participate in the IMT Apprentice program by identifying skill requirements for your company, hiring new workers, or selecting current workers as apprentices, and providing mentors to deliver on-the-job learning. Employers must provide time for apprentices to complete their instruction, as well as define pay rates, including wage increments at key points as apprentices become more skilled. Employers, mentor, and apprentice maintain apprentice records to formally complete the program.

### ***Selecting a Mentor to Deliver the On-the-Job (OJT) Program***

- Select a mentor that is a current employee with several years' experience in the specific/related position as the apprentice.
- The mentor will bring their experience, expertise, and knowledge in the specified position.
- The mentor will use guidelines to explain, demonstrate, observe, and assess the learning style of the apprentice.

- The mentor will give the apprentice immediate feedback on performance.
- The mentor will track the apprentice's skills during the OJT period in accordance with the Related Technical Instruction as stated in the Standards of Apprentice Appendix.
- The mentor will assess the apprentice's acquired skills at the end of the OJT period.
- Recognize the mentor's involvement in passing on their knowledge and keeping their skill alive in the next generation of workers.
- *MSSC does offer an online Train the Trainer Program to support the company's mentor and provide additional tools to effectively mentor the apprentice for an additional cost.*

### **Selecting an Apprentice**

- Select an apprentice who shows an interest in growing with your company. We encourage you to consider women and minorities for this program as they often have time-constraints around family and find it difficult to participate in more traditional classroom-based learning apprentice programs.
- Clearly define what the apprentice will be learning and the company's expectations.
- Develop a training schedule. This uses information from previous steps.
- Consider having the apprentice evaluate the mentor and the OJT program. This will help to improve the OJT program for future training.
- Apprentices are given incremental raises for mastering competencies as required in the Apprenticeship Standards'. This builds loyalty, confidence and improves motivation to put in those extra hours at home to build a career path.
- Recognize the apprentice's accomplishments.

It is important to celebrate apprentice successes as they complete each module recognizing their dedication and keep them motivated. Consider hosting a very memorable completion ceremony for the apprentices and their families when the apprentice completes his or her apprenticeship program. Please take pictures and share them with FloridaMakes and your regional manufacturing association! The FloridaMakes Apprentice program was created by industry advisors who are employers to meet the entry-level training needs for manufacturers and we welcome your feedback on the program as we hope it will contribute to growing a skilled talent pipeline for Florida's manufacturers.