

Building Your Future Workforce at Community Colleges

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Abstract:

Community Colleges are an excellent resource for finding skilled employees. This presentation/paper attempts to share best practices for developing a collaborative action plan with your local community colleges to feed your future workforce pipeline and upskilling your current employees based on your needs.

Background:

Throughout the Forging Industry Educational and Research Foundation's history beginning in 1961, the goal has been to support the forging industry through technology development and education. The Foundation's Strategic Plan specifically states the Foundation's Mission is to connect the educational community and industry **to develop the future workforce**, promote forged products research and facilitate technology transfer.

Need:

- Would your organization benefit from access to a pool of local, trained and skilled future employees?
- What/where are your specific needs? With your team, identify skill gap needs for future and current employees.

Resources:

- What local two year or trade schools resources are available? Do you or your team know someone at that institution to begin a conversation? Reach out to the [Forging Industry Educational and Research Foundation](#) as your partner. We can bring together other FIA Members to meet with local Community Colleges with the potential to work with you.
- Potential additional resources: [National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers](#); [American Association of Community Colleges](#);
- Reach out to your team, colleagues, LinkedIn contacts, state and local manufacturing groups, etc. to find someone who know someone; (may take a couple of phone calls or introductions to find the right person(s))
- Reach out to other local employers with the same or similar needs to work together.
- Make an appointment to discuss your skill needs and hiring rates with Community College contact(s).

Action:

- Work with your Community College partners to develop career pathways for students that include the skill sets you need
- Offer plant tours to students
- Make a presentation to students about your company and opportunities
- Hire interns/Co-ops
- Work with your Community College partners to develop apprenticeship programs and scholarship opportunities.

Employer/Industry Role:

- Participate as a member of the college's Advisory Committee
- Provide information on current and future needs
- Commit to substantive involvement by key personnel
- Determine specific knowledge, skills and abilities needed
- Provide feedback to college on student progress

College Role:

- Develop and/or enhance curriculum content to meet employer needs
- Provide industry critical skills for employment readiness
- Facilitate on-going engagement with employers
- Find Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to develop training programs

Engagement Opportunities:

- Market your company as key in the supply chain (aerospace, energy, etc.)
- Community Engagement (job fairs, Manufacturing Day)
- Internships; Co-ops; Apprenticeships
- Be creative! (scholarships, class presentations)

References:

An Employer Engagement Playbook – Colleges and Employers Collaborate to Develop the Skilled Workforce of the Future, September 2018 - Starr Sherman, Cuyahoga Community College, Judith Crocker Ed.D., MJCrocker Associates, Nikki Glazer Stoicoui, New Growth Group

The Myths & Realities of Successful Workforce Solutions: Lessons from Supply Chain's Leading Edge, Dr. David DeLong, MHI and Smart Workforce Strategies, 2017

Additional Resources:

Forging Foundation – www.fierf.org

Apprenticeships and community colleges: Do they have a future together?

- <https://www.aei.org/publication/apprenticeships-and-community-colleges-do-they-have-a-future-together>

After decades of pushing bachelor's degrees, U.S. needs more tradespeople

- <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/decades-pushing-bachelors-degrees-u-s-needs-tradespeople>

When Discussing Apprenticeships, Keep in Mind the Big Picture

Pathways to Prosperity Report <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/blog/when-discussing-apprenticeships-keep-in-mind-the-big-picture.html>

2018 Deloitte & The Manufacturing Institute skills gap and future of

work study - http://www.themanufacturinginstitute.org/~media/E323C4D8F75A-470E8C96D7A07F0A14FB/DI_2018_Deloitte_MFI_skills_gap_FoW_study.pdf

National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers - <https://ncatc.org>

American Association of Community Colleges - <https://www.aacc.nche.edu>

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