

# Manufacturing Talent: *The Future of Apprenticeships*

Students, parents, teachers and school counselors have begun to rethink career counseling. For years the standard line was that students had to go on to college in order to be successful. That thinking has led us down the road of poor college graduation rates and high student-loan debt. It's time to take a serious look at the results of a student's career assessment and examine the variety of pathways that exist within an occupation. Students should make informed decisions about what they want to do and what meaningful education and experiences they will need in order to get where they want to go.



One option for many occupations is the Apprenticeship model. This employer-driven program combines on-the-job learning with related technical instruction. Apprenticeship builds employment skills and establishes higher levels of employment and wages. Apprenticeship is an "earn and learn" model. Many employers today are utilizing this model to attract employees, invest in the apprentice's development with the hope of retaining and growing them to be future leaders in their organization.

There are 5 components of a Registered Apprenticeship:

- 1. Business involvement** – Employers define skill requirements, recruit apprentices, and provide on-the-job training under the supervision of an employer-selected mentor.
- 2. Structured on-the-job training** – Apprentices get hands-on training from an experienced mentor in the organization.
- 3. Related Technical Instruction** – Classroom instruction complements the on-the-job learning.

By Patricia Moran, Ph.D., Director of Apprenticeship Programs, NJMEP

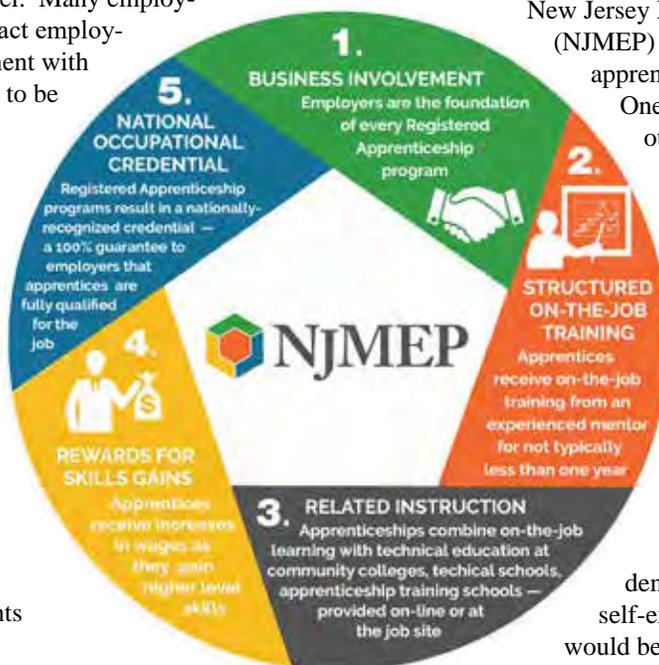
- 4. Rewards for Skill Gains** – Apprentices generally receive pay increases as their skills and knowledge increase. This helps reward and motivate the apprentice to continue to learn and grow.
- 5. National Occupational Credential** – Apprenticeship Programs range from 1 year to 4 years. Once an apprentice graduates, they receive a nationally-recognized credential from USDOL.

To be an apprentice, you have to be employed. Many people think that only organized labor unions have apprentices. Today, there are apprentices in a wide variety of industries and occupations. There are individuals who graduate from one apprenticeship program, practice their new skills for a bit, and then go on to another apprenticeship or even college.

New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP) has worked hard to get to two apprenticeships registered with USDOL.

One is for Technical Sales and the other is for Industrial Manufacturing Production Technician. With the assistance of the NJ Department of Labor, these apprenticeships will be implemented throughout the state utilizing the NJMEP Pro-Action Educational Network™. This network is a collaborative partnership between diverse resource partners all attempting to help employers address the needs of their workforce.

There are many options for students today. They should take time to self-examine and determine what path would be the best alternative for them.



On February 15, 2019 the NJMEP team volunteered and worked together at the Community Foodbank of New Jersey to help prepare boxes of food for 1,037 seniors!

You too can donate by going to <https://www.njmep.org/manufacturing-cares/food-drive/>