

WHAT IS APPRENTICESHIP?

About Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship is a partnership of employers, workers, the State of Washington, and a variety of schools and community colleges. Apprenticeship is occupational skill training that combines on-the-job experience with classroom instruction.

- Employers provide career training.
- Apprentices become valued members of the work force and assets to business.
- The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council provides technical assistance.
- Schools, community colleges, and industry training centers provide classroom training.

Apprenticeship trains workers to meet industry standards for a given occupation. Employers and skilled workers design training programs that meet the individual and changing needs of Oregon industries and technology.

Apprenticeship is a proven way to train people for careers that demand a wide range of skills, knowledge, and independent judgment. Programs combine progressively challenging tasks, learned and practiced on-the-job, with classroom training. Most apprenticeship programs last two to four years.

Apprentices are dedicated learners and skilled employees.

An Apprentice is a highly motivated individual who undertakes a long-term training program.

An Apprentice may be a man or a woman, either newly entering the work force or looking to upgrade current skills, someone already working in the construction trades, or in service and industrial occupations.

Apprenticeable occupations range from baker to heavy equipment operator, from tool and die maker to high tech programmer. A list of nearly 80 apprenticeable trades is available from your local apprenticeship office.

An Apprentice is usually a full-time employee who is learning while earning. The beginning salary, about half the salary of a fully trained worker, increases as the apprentice learns and performs more complex tasks proficiently.

An Apprentice spends a specified amount of time studying theory and practical application in classrooms taught by journey level teachers. Classroom work helps the apprentice prepare for more difficult tasks on the job.

Employer Benefits

Apprenticeship is an efficient and cost-effective system that can help businesses become more productive. For example, apprenticeship:

- Increases productivity. Motivated and highly trained workers produce better products, have better work habits and are absent less often.
- Increases worker safety. Classroom study coupled with on-the-job training helps workers better understand their jobs and their accompanying risks, and helps them avoid job-related injuries, saving employers time and money.
- Reduces labor turnover. Apprentices see the time and energy spent in the classroom as a

long term investment in their careers.

- Creates a versatile work force.
- Provides the employer with employees who can adapt to new technologies.
- Provides an effective way to screen new employees both during and after the program.
- Establishes a probationary period to make sure the employee fits the employer's needs.

Employee Benefits

An apprenticeship program offers workers:

- Paid employment during training.
- Opportunity to learn skills needed by employers throughout an industry.
- Credit towards an associate degree at community colleges for completion of apprenticeship program.
- A more secure career and the ability to adapt to new job requirements.
- The background to become a lead person, foreman, or supervisor.

Apprenticeship Committees

Apprenticeship programs start with apprenticeship committees. All employers of apprentices can become involved with an on-going committee or they can organize a committee for a new apprenticeship program.

Apprenticeship committees decide their current and future training needs and develop guidelines for their own programs.

Consultants from the Bureau of Labor and Industries who are familiar with industry standards and related training guidelines work with them. Committees include both employer and employee representatives of a company.

Based upon market conditions and industry needs, the committee decides:

- Criteria for becoming an apprentice.
- Skills required and the level of proficiency in those skills necessary to reach journeyman level.
- Numbers of apprenticeship openings.
- Wage rates and wage progressions based upon demonstrated competencies.
- Required course curriculum to complement on-the-job training; (usually a minimum of 144 hours of related classroom training for each year of apprenticeship).
- Methods for supervising apprentice progress.
- Procedures for selection, employment and training that guarantee fair and equal opportunity to all applicants and workers.

Committees may also choose instructors and make arrangements for a local community college or educational service district to provide classroom training.

Apprenticeship committees meet at least twice a year to review the progress of apprentices and to update standards and curriculum to current industry needs.

The Employer

The apprentice's employer has the following role:

- Oversees apprentices' on-the-job training and monitors attendance at related training classes.
- Evaluates apprentices' progress before recommending advancement to the next pay level.

- Recommends "Award of Completion" certificate when an apprentice has satisfactorily completed the required course work and on-the-job training.

The Schools

The State Department of Education, local school districts community colleges and other training facilities are responsible for offering related coursework to apprentices receiving on-the-job training. Schools and community colleges provide:

- Coursework that is coordinated with on-the-job training program. Examples include advanced mathematics, basic and advanced electronics, theory and classroom experience with industry machinery and equipment.
- Teachers with expertise in the occupation.
- Opportunities to earn credit for completed academic courses and on-the-job training.

The Certificate

An apprenticeship "Award of Completion" certifies that an individual has been trained in all aspects of an occupation and has met the requirements for program completion. The certificate, issued by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council, is recognized throughout the state. The certificate:

- Is recognized industry-wide as a valid indicator of high-quality, standardized training.
- Provides documentation for community college credit for the on-the-job training.

The Apprenticeship and Training Division

The Bureau of Labor and Industries' Apprenticeship and Training Division apprenticeship consultant facilitates cooperation among employers, workers and schools. An apprenticeship consultant:

- Helps the committee design training programs to meet an industry's specific needs.
- Advises committees on standards and curricula used-elsewhere in the state and nation.
- Provides information on statewide employment needs and trends.
- Works with committees to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations and the requirements of the state Apprenticeship Council.
- Assists in updating standards to maintain state-of-the-art training.

Apprenticeship Helps Washington Prepare for the Future

As Washington's economy diversifies business and industry face a shortage of technically skilled workers. Because apprenticeship committees understand their local area's demands for workers and rely on employer participation, they can respond quickly to provide qualified workers for a changing market, and reduce the necessity to recruit skilled workers from out of state.

The Apprenticeship and Training Division is committed to meeting the demands of the labor market. By adapting the best of apprenticeship training to the requirements of new technology, the division can help Washington employers fill job openings with motivated workers who want a secure working situation.

One call can start the system working for you. Check the list of offices for the nearest apprenticeship consultant.