



Multiple
Pathways
Initiative

Innovative Skills-Based Talent Practices

**A Collection of Fresh Ideas, New Practices
and Lessons Learned**

Amidst massive economic and labor market shifts, establishing innovative talent practices across sourcing, talent development, and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging initiatives has changed from a 'nice to have' to a critical need when seeking and retaining talent.

To support and enhance practices in these areas, Business Roundtable and its Multiple Pathways Initiative (MPI) established an Innovation Working Group to inspire the identification and adoption of transformational programs, practices and technologies to develop a more equitable and inclusive workforce.

This compendium gathers the efforts of the Innovation Working Group to spark action by other companies. We've organized these efforts into three primary focus areas:

1 Reskilling

2 Selection

3 Sourcing



When the project began, we took a look at the practices our 11 member organizations already had underway or in the works. These spanned from early-stage concepts to robust, mature efforts. We surfaced over 30 practices supporting the expansion and diversification of talent pools, skills-based hiring and talent management.

We highlight 9 of those practices in this compendium so you can see key information—like why a program was started, key outcomes, challenges faced and recommendations on how you can get started successfully with initiatives like these. Conversations about these specific practices inspired some working group members to start or enhance internal initiatives. Sidebars on pages 9, 17 and 26 offer deeper dives from Target, Abbott and Schnitzer Steel about implementing nascent innovations even amidst labor market turmoil.

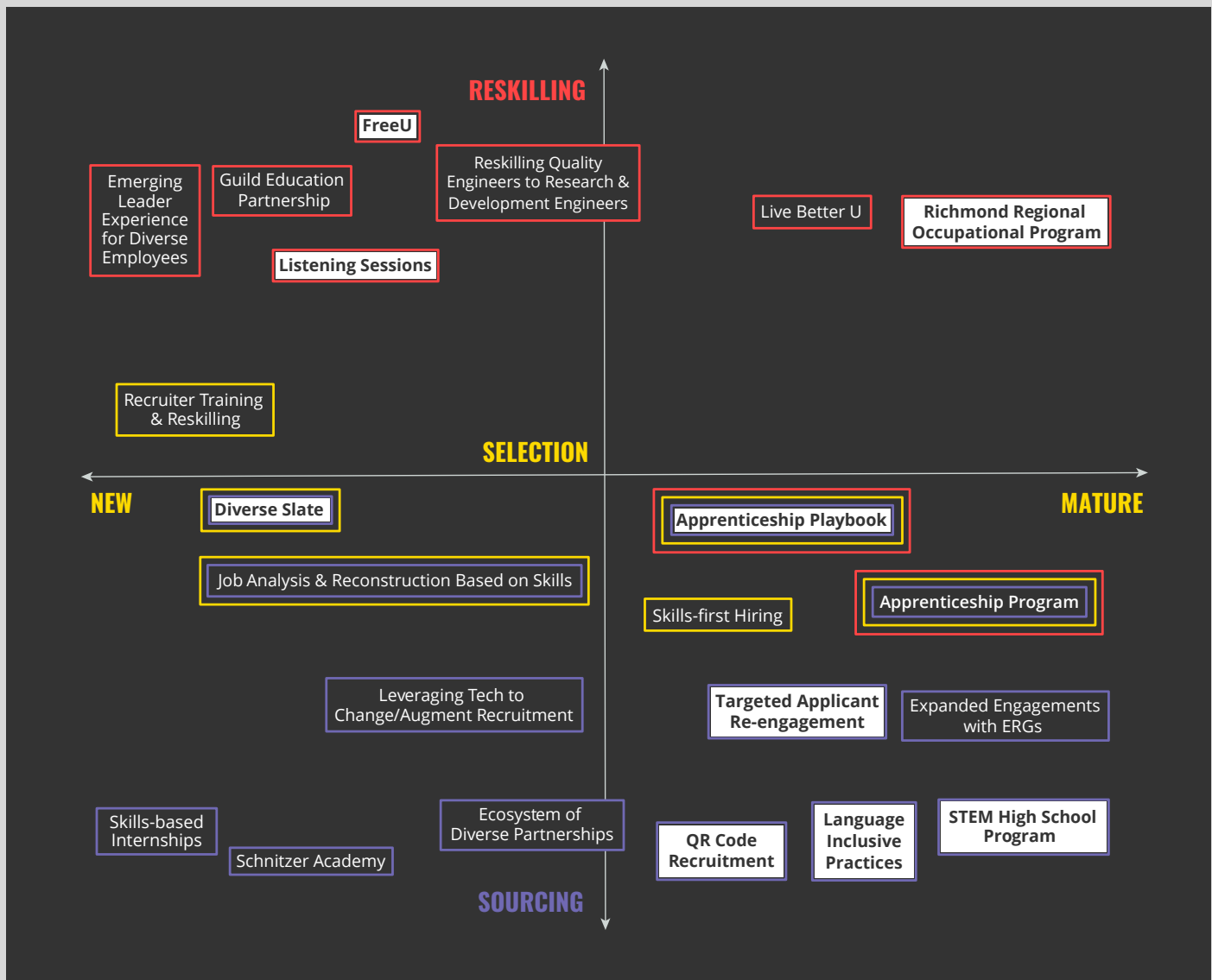
One of the biggest lessons from this work is that innovating talent practices requires change management. While innovative technologies and tools can help, it's really the human element that underpins sustained change for more inclusive talent practices. Shifting mindsets and behaviors can seem daunting, but it's a critical element to sustain initiatives that can otherwise be short-lived or entirely unsuccessful.

As Julie Sweet, CEO of Accenture, shared: "These pathways to employment and a more inclusive workforce are a powerful example of how we can truly make a difference for our businesses, our communities and the people in our communities."

We hope this compendium serves as inspiration for ways to intentionally design new, or enhance existing, programs to elevate talented workers of all backgrounds who have the skills companies need to be successful.

Glossary

This graphic illustrates 24 of the more than 30 innovative practices already underway by the Innovation Working Group's 11 members. The 2x2 indicates the level of maturity of each practice, as well as where each practice sits on the talent acquisition and management spectrum: sourcing; selection; and reskilling or upskilling. Click on one of the 9 featured practices for an in-depth look.



Targeted Applicant Re-Engagement

An initiative to spark new interest in workers who have previously applied, who meet new hiring needs, through geographical targeting (Schnitzer Steel).

Apprenticeship Network & Playbook

An open-source playbook with step-by-step instructions, best practices, resources and case studies for developing apprenticeship programs, to encourage investment and create a shared pool of apprenticeship talent (Accenture and Aon, Bridging the Gap Between Talent and Opportunity Apprenticeship Playbook).

Apprenticeship Program

Work-based learning program that enables participants to earn and learn, preparing them for a specific role (Northrop Grumman, Schnitzer Steel).

Building an Ecosystem for Diverse Partnerships

A collection of partnerships with different talent development organizations, from community colleges to online providers (Accenture).

Internal Career Development Portal

An internal career development portal for employees, including self-assessment, training resources and peer-to-peer support (Abbott, Career Connect).

Diverse Slate

Creating real-time visibility on talent pipeline diversity metrics to recruiters and hiring managers, with required benchmarks to advance the process (Accenture, Northrop Grumman).

Emerging Leader Experience for Diverse Team Members

Providing sponsorships, mentorship and training to diverse employees to promote advancement (ADP).

Expanded Engagement with Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Voluntary, employee-led groups that are typically led and participated in by employees who share a characteristic, whether it's gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, lifestyle or interest (Northrop Grumman).

Language Inclusive Practices

Hiring bilingual managers to support ESOL workers, providing translation and interpretation services, and creating inclusive language practices across talent acquisition and management (Schnitzer Steel).

Job Analysis and Reconstruction Based on Skills

Deconstructing and reconstructing job descriptions to focus on the core skills and other key factors, such as life experience and interests, increasing transparency, and enabling internal mobility (Target & Walmart).

Leveraging Tech to Reimagine Recruitment

Immersive virtual reality experience that allows candidates to visualize a day in the life of an employee and develop a concrete, hands-on understanding of the role (Accenture).

Career Learning & Development Engagement Campaign

Employee focus groups and informational sessions to increase awareness of and engagement with career growth and development tools (ADP, Listening Sessions).

Paid Training for Credentialing and Degrees

Paid training and education to employees, providing equitable access to learning, credentialing, and degree opportunities (Walmart, Live Better U, Abbott, FreeU, Target and Guild Education Partnership).

Opportunity Marketplace

Internal marketplace to provide flexible scheduling and short-term role opportunities that enable current employees to explore new skills, experiences and stretch roles (Abbott & Target).

QR Code Recruitment

Recruitment through QR code placement across retail sites highlighting geographically targeted career opportunities (Schnitzer Steel).

Targeted Reskilling to Meet Sourcing Needs

Training employees in roles with transferable skills for conversion into internal roles based on anticipated sourcing needs (Abbott, Reskilling Quality engineers to Research & Development Engineers; Walmart, Short-Form Learning Pilot for Cyber Security).

Career Pathways Training Through Local Community Engagement

Local community pathway program to introduce career opportunities, along with relevant knowledge, experience and skills, through local community partnership and engagement (Chevron, Richmond Regional Occupation Program).

Post-Secondary Pathways Training

Post-secondary paid training, work-based learning and placement assistance through community college, trade school and high school partnerships (Schnitzer Steel, Schnitzer Bay Area Academy pilot).

Skills-Based Internships

Shifting from degree to skills through summer internships for two-year community college students (Accenture).

Skills-First Hiring

Removing the four-year degree requirement and shifting sourcing and selection (Accenture).

STEM High School Internship Program

Introduction of STEM career opportunities to diverse youth through high school internships focused on STEM (Abbott).

Recruiter Training & Reskilling

Training of recruiters on how to look for adjacent skills and how to interview and assess talent based on skills and ability, rather than pedigree (Northrop Grumman).

STEM High School Program

Sourcing



Participant Information

Partner: Abbott

Program: STEM High School Program

Goal: Cultivate a diverse pipeline for workforce talent in STEM

Focus Area: Sourcing

Time worked on initiative: 10 years

Why your company should consider a STEM initiative

Investing in youth is critical for cultivating a diverse talent pool, and a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) can prepare students with the skills the workforce needs. For example, consider Abbott, a company that develops innovative healthcare-related technologies, and their STEM internship for high school students. Their approach aims to harness the next generation of STEM leaders and provide them with opportunities to discover that STEM is impactful, creative, interesting and meaningful. It's not just number crunching and sitting at computers; STEM professions change the world as we know it for the better.

The High School STEM Internship program and its initiatives support the business and provide shared value through:

- Enhancing access of diverse talent for future business success
- Equipping future talent with skills that employers need them to have (including confidence in navigating a business environment and potentially reducing training costs)
- Increasing retention rates when interns return to work for the employer after earning a degree
- Exposing students to opportunities and future career paths at employers' organizations
- Improving a company's reputation as an employer of choice and valued community partner

Background

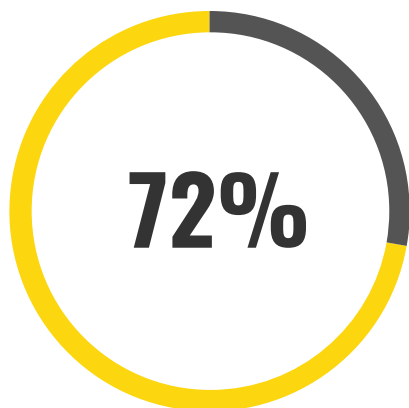
Since 2012, Abbott has offered a high school STEM internship program to students from diverse backgrounds, exposing them to science, technology, engineering and math. The program has since grown, offering opportunities to about 200 students over 11 years at Abbott facilities across the United States.

In 2019, Abbott decided to address the larger audience of students they are unable to directly hire by creating the "Shaping the Future of STEM" blueprint. This scalable plan is available for free to other companies and organizations with the hope that they will create their own high school STEM internship programs. While many internships serve college-aged students who are preparing to enter the workforce (including Abbott's own college internship program), high school internships enable employers to reach a larger range of students and expose them to fields they might otherwise dismiss. Research has shown that more than 60 percent of 9th grade students lose interest in STEM by graduation.

Outcomes

When Abbott started the program, the goal was to expose female and underrepresented students to STEM early in their educational journeys, enabling them to grow their interest and confidence in these subjects. Abbott also hoped that engaging high school students would increase the quantity and quality of the company's college internship applicants.

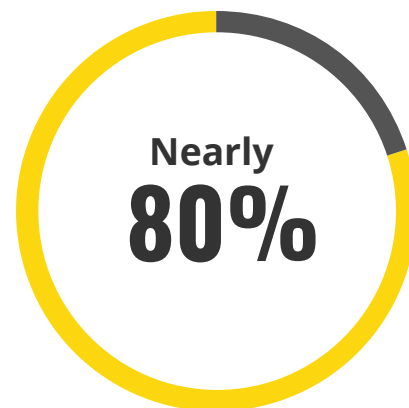
Abbott has seen the outcomes they hoped for a decade ago but at a much larger scale and impact than anticipated. Abbott started the program with three high school students at one site. Its success has translated into the expansion to about 50 students annually across 11 Abbott sites. The company also has expanded the program internationally to include countries like Singapore, Vietnam and Brazil.



of former high school STEM interns hired as full-time engineers are female



of summer 2022 high school STEM interns are female



of summer 2022 high school STEM interns are from minority or diverse backgrounds

How to get started

Abbott hopes others will draw inspiration from their work, and to that end, has developed resources to help other companies create their own STEM High School programs. As you get started, Abbott encourages you to:

- 1.** Review legal and logistical considerations.
- 2.** Understand the needs of your student population, such as access to work attire and site location.
- 3.** Review Abbott's resources on [Women in STEM](#) and [Abbott's STEM Sisters](#) to learn more about the value of and need for programs like this from people participating in them.
- 4.** Explore Abbott's program design and approach through the [Shaping the Future of STEM Blueprint](#).

Case in Point

Re- and up-skilling through innovative apprenticeships

Even before joining the Business Roundtable MPI Innovation Working Group, leaders at Abbott had been thinking about launching an apprenticeship program. Their goal: to bring in new talent and offer upskilling or re-skilling opportunities to existing employees, especially those without a bachelor's degree. The Abbott Talent Acquisition team hoped such a program would complement their other DEI-focused career development practices (including a STEM High School Program described on pages 6-8). Bryan Quick, Director, Talent Acquisition, and Global Head of University Relations at Abbott explains: "What we needed wasn't being totally fulfilled by our traditional internship and rotational programs."

Joining the Business Roundtable collaboration with other business leaders gave Abbott greater insight into best practices from peers who had already launched and sustained apprenticeships. A presentation from Accenture and Aon on the Chicago Apprentice Network was particularly helpful. Core to the Network's approach is a process of intentionally engaging funders, community colleges and regional companies in order to extend the apprenticeship model beyond any single company (see compendium page 25 for more details).

These details gave Abbott their own to-do list, explains Quick: "While we had a strong idea of where we wanted to go, working with Aon, and specifically their [playbook document](#), gave us good data that helped us execute. We had experience launching programs but limited awareness of our blind spots specific to an

apprenticeship pilot." Sebastien Pottier, Abbott's Divisional Vice President of Global Talent Acquisition at Abbott and the Innovation Working Group co-chair, adds: "The playbook provided critical data points on the timeline and scalability of a program for long-term success."

The Abbott pilot program is scheduled to launch in August 2022. It is structured so participants study tuition-free at a [local community college](#) two days a week, work at Abbott three days a week and receive structured on-the-job training from an Abbott mentor. Once apprentices complete tech certifications, they can join The Abbott global engineering services team in roles such as pipefitters, electricians or HVAC technicians, depending on their interests. Quick adds: "We are committed to making sure there are opportunities when they complete the program."

A pilot serves as a learning opportunity and a chance to refine program details prior to a wider launch. But even the nuts and bolts of the pilot itself benefited from Business Roundtable peer conversations. Before the Innovation Working Group convened, one line of business at Abbott was ready to move forward with their own apprenticeship pilot, but conversations helped Quick realize the need to first define logistics across the company. Skipping that step could create an inconsistent and unpolished experience for Abbott apprentices. They needed to plan for a rollout across targeted lines of business.

In preparation for a wider launch after this initial pilot the Abbott team has:

- Defined the program's length
- Named salary ranges for apprentices
- Pursued a U.S. Department of Labor certification
- Designed meaningful work assignments
- Trained managers as program mentors
- Built out recruitment strategies for candidates and university partners

Some of these programmatic aspects were not previously on the radar at Abbott. Pottier points to corporate peers as valuable advisors in the process of codifying logistics and setting up infrastructure: "Although we had a relatively strong idea on how to launch a program like this, exchanging ideas with members of this group helped us to develop a leapfrog strategy to launch a first Abbott Apprenticeship pilot in 2022." The goal is to begin recruiting candidates outside of Abbott and eventually onboard 8 apprentices by the end of the pilot season. To measure success, they will look at metrics around participant diversity data, participant completion rates, conversion from hourly staff to full-time staff and program expansion to additional locations.

Quick's recommendation for other companies considering apprenticeships, a suggestion that really applies to any internal diversity initiative is: "Make sure you reach out to your professional network. It's easy to think you have it figured out if you've done it before, but you'll never know when you'll find 1-2 things from someone else in your industry that will really shape your program."



Putting Employees on the Fast Track to a Bachelor's Degree

FreeU



Participant Information

Partner: Abbott

Program: FreeU

Goal: Create an affordable and flexible way to attain a degree

Focus Area: Reskilling

Time worked on initiative: 12 months

Opening flexible and affordable pathways to a bachelor's degree

In an effort to offer interested employees a way to attain a bachelor's degree, Abbott created FreeU. This program covers 100 percent of the costs of core coursework, and employees take classes online at their own pace. After employees complete the core coursework, they can finish their degree at one of Abbott's accredited partner universities while receiving financial reimbursement through Abbott's tuition program.

The program also offers tutoring hours and English language support, which provides personalized English lessons and practice to help non-native English speakers prepare for college coursework.

Background

This initiative started as a response to the needs at one of Abbott's manufacturing sites, where employees were looking for more flexible and affordable ways to earn a degree. In many cases, English was their second language.

Outcomes

At the initiative's outset, Abbott aimed to provide their employees looking to earn a degree with a concrete solution that was affordable and flexible. In the months since launch, more than 100 employees have joined the program.

Feedback from employees has been extremely positive. Employees are seeing this program as a convenient way to earn a degree and continue growing in the organization. For example, one employee said: "My experience has been amazing. It's so new age learning. It's such a refreshing and new way of getting your degree."

When the app launched, Abbott's goal was to have as many hiring managers as possible download the app to consume and engage with the content. Adoption and use of the app has been a great success. Hiring managers are engaging with the content and sharing their own pieces of advice to others by recording short video clips and posting them. To continue the success of the project, Abbott believes that the key to ongoing success is to continually produce relevant and fun content.

How to get started

Abbott recommends starting by listening to your employees, understand their needs and then create benefits programming to best address those needs. Abbott aims to build the workforce of tomorrow and provide opportunities to all their employees at all stages of their careers.

While they have already provided support to employees with student loan debt through their innovative Freedom 2 Save program, they also knew employees were looking to earn advanced degrees but faced obstacles to getting started.

Two of the most common barriers to employees pursuing those degrees are time and money. Abbott knew they needed a solution that could be flexible and affordable. FreeU is exactly that. FreeU provides general education classes in an online format that lets employees study at their own pace and around their work and family obligations. Upon successful completion, general education credits transfer to a partner university, where employees can complete the remainder of their degrees without debt thanks to Abbott's tuition reimbursement benefits.



Ensuring Equitable Recruiting

Diverse Slate



Participant Information

Partner: Accenture

Program: Diverse Slate

Goal: Ensure an equitable recruitment process

Focus Area: Selection (and Sourcing)

Time worked on initiative: 4 years

A data-based approach to increasing diversity

Accenture is very committed to increasing the diversity of its workforce, and recruiting is one of the most important aspects of that effort. To systematically ensure that diverse pipelines are being built and considered in every open role at Accenture, they created Diverse Slate—a crucial tool in Accenture’s equitable recruiting process.

Background

Accenture's Diverse Slate program provides diversity pipeline data to our recruiters and hiring managers for each open role and establishes a set of benchmarks and best practices that must be applied before they conduct interviews. The goal of the tool is to identify four to six qualified candidates with at least 50 percent diversity across multiple categories: women, under-represented minorities, military and persons with disabilities.

Outcomes

So far, the tool has met Accenture's expectations for increasing diversity in their talent pipelines and in hiring diverse staff. The tool has systematically impacted every job posting at Accenture, increasing diversity recruiting results, mitigating bias and promoting meritocracy. Accenture's diversity recruiting results have consistently increased year-over-year during this practice's implementation in alignment with our external commitments.

How to get started

For organizations interested setting up a tool like Diverse Slate:

- A rigorous process to obtain accurate data helped us accelerate change and increase diversity recruiting results year over year
- Training and consistent implementation across all parts of the business were crucial to ensuring an efficient and equitable process
- Targeted actions and best practices in connecting with diverse talent helped maximize our engagement with each individual
- Through a lens of compassion, we never lost sight of the human element in our recruiting process

For a simple tool created by member company Schnitzer Steel, check out Case in Point: Using collected knowledge to build simplicity.



The Value of Listening

Listening Sessions



Participant Information

Partner: ADP

Program: Listening Sessions

Goal: Build awareness of career growth for underrepresented groups

Focus Area: Reskilling

Time worked on initiative: 2 months

Taking the time to better understand

When challenged to think about how to better support underrepresented groups in attaining new or advancing roles, ADP felt that they had a strong suite of tools but wanted to better understand the perspective of the people they aimed to help; whether these tools are known, used and useful; and what is needed.

Background

To more effectively understand the level of awareness of career growth and development tools—as well as gaps in needs—ADP created a series of listening sessions to understand if and how staff were using these tools. In addition, these sessions offered an opportunity for building a communications strategy with staff to ensure adoption and awareness of the tools made available to them.

This is the beginning of what ADP hopes will be a long-term process. They have a series of meetings scheduled over the next months. They are bringing a representative cross-section of staff from across the organization to participate in the sessions and plan to use these sessions as part of a continuous improvement process.

Outcomes

This process is still nascent, so outcomes are limited. However, ADP expects to see awareness gaps and differing levels of support from management on taking time to use the tools.

How to get started

ADP believes that initiatives like this one are best suited to organizations that already provide a robust offering of career growth and development tools and programs. A program can only be meaningful if it's well known, people know how to use it, and it meets the needs of the intended audience. Measuring these things once a suite of programs is in place can help an organization to fine-tune their offerings and ensure they are delivering the best ROI.

For another example of listening to the needs of frontline workers to generate simple solutions, read Case in Point: Collaborating with competitors on page 20.



Case in Point

Collaborating with competitors

Competitor companies do not always have to be competitive. Representatives from Target and Walmart joined the Innovation Working Group and built trusting relationships around a shared desire to make their companies are better places to work for all people.

Both Target and Walmart have experienced tremendous growth—and accompanying labor market shifts—as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both have a similar structure in that their frontline workforces are made up of entry-level roles and represent the most diversity among their employees. Internal mobility and advancement for this specific cohort are priorities for Target and Walmart.

Target brought a new talent advancement project called “Success Profiles” to the Working Group for feedback and sharing. This project is a big part of the Target overall talent mobility strategy and desire to move to more equitable and skills-based talent ecosystems. Target is a company with over 4,000 jobs. Leaders were hearing that team members did not always understand how to get from job A to job B or navigate building their career, and Target needed documented insight on the biggest roles to enable training creation and career pathway identification. Job descriptions certainly offered clarity on the number of years of experience and specific qualifications but did not provide the detail needed to help team members know what skills and experiences they needed to gain to advance. Kristen Lee, Director, Talent Management at Target, realized the need for simple language to explain how to progress to a given role, by taking on projects, gigs or training opportunities. She imagined a team member

asking: “If this is the job I want next in my career, what skills and experiences do I need, and how do I go about getting those?”

Success Profiles are candidate-facing one-page documents with a list of essential skills and experiences needed and gained for each type of role. Target has already piloted these for the most common jobs, which represent only 15% of total jobs but employ up to 70% of the workforce. Lee hopes this tool will create more transparency and shared language and nest alongside the company’s broader set of D&I initiatives.

Just like the Sourcing List, these Success Profiles are uncomplicated. Perhaps their simplicity is why they have received so much traction and momentum internally. Hiring managers and leaders are excited to have clear expectations that can help define equitable interview questions and curate upskilling pathways and advancement opportunities for people in entry-level roles. A simple tool has multiple use cases that support candidates, leaders and the organization as a whole. To expand Success Profiles to the remaining 85% of jobs at Target, Lee and her colleagues will meet with individual teams to learn more about roles, identify top and critical skills, and then distribute Success Profiles across the organization. Ultimately the vision is to align these profiles with internal learning efforts so that candidates also understand how the tuition-free arrangement Target has with Guild Education can address any existing skill gaps.

Brandon Carson, Vice President of Learning and Leadership at Walmart, was always open and candid with Lee about his company’s efforts

to increase internal mobility and sourcing for mid- and senior-level roles. Lee explains: “The working groups provided forums for insight and input to make our work better. The value really comes from the partnerships.” On the unusual partnership between competitors, Lee explains: “The opportunity to advance our practices together in service of more equitable experiences for not only employees at Target but also a broader set of employees—it’s a no brainer.”

The urgency for a tool like this one has never felt greater given an unpredictable labor market. Lee explains: “All of our business leaders are reading articles about ‘The Great Resignation’ and are concerned about their talent pipeline as well as retention and engagement. Since career growth is a top driver of retention, we’re really missing out if we’re not addressing it. I’m eager to stay connected so I can see how these initiatives are playing out in such a changing environment and economy.”



Building Strong Career Onramps

Richmond Regional Occupational Program



Participant Information

Partner: Chevron

Program: Richmond Regional
Occupational Program

Goal: Cultivate a diverse pipeline for
workforce talent in STEM

Focus Area: Selection (and Sourcing
and Reskilling)

Time worked on initiative: 46 years

Prepping students for career success

For the past 46 years, the Chevron Richmond Refinery and the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCoe) have partnered to create strong community engagement and build a pathway for jobs at Chevron's local refinery. The Regional Occupational Program (ROP) has been an ongoing success for the partnership, with an average of 80 to 100 students graduating from the program each year.



Background

The Chevron/CCCoE ROP courses help prepare students for a job in the petrochemical and related industries. Students learn basic processes and equipment common to the industry and have the additional benefit of developing strong communication and teamwork skills for participants.

Outcomes

At the program's outset, Chevron hoped to build a strong pipeline for jobs into the refinery and build strong relationships in the local community to support Chevron refinery. The program has helped to bolster Chevron's reputation as a diverse and inclusive employer in the community; it also gives Chevron the opportunity to train potential candidates for jobs

in our industry. Perhaps most importantly, the program gives students the opportunity to build and demonstrate necessary skills that can be used at Chevron or in other career pathways. They typically have 80 to 100 students per year; Chevron on average hires 20 percent of the graduating classes.

How to get started

Chevron offers the following tips for other organizations looking to start similar initiatives:

- Find and retain the right training instructors.
- Consider virtual training models, something Chevron did during the pandemic.
- Be aware of the costs and benefits of the training initiative.

Bridging the Gap Between Talent and Opportunity

An Apprenticeship Playbook for Professional Jobs



Participant Information

Partner: Accenture

Program: Apprenticeship Playbook

Goal: Provide greater opportunity to untapped talent

Focus Area: Sourcing, Selection, Reskilling

Time worked on initiative: 5 years

[Access Apprenticeship Playbook](#)

Writing a new playbook to create new career pathways

There is a large volume of highly capable and eager people who have not completed a degree or do not have extensive professional experience for a variety of reasons, including their financial situation, lack of access to higher education or professional jobs, and timing. An apprentice model provides an engine to greatly expand the potential candidate pool while providing career opportunities to individuals who would otherwise not be qualified for the role and may not have access to the role through other channels. Professional apprenticeship programs can help address the skills gap facing most companies,

provide greater opportunity to people who are underrepresented across industries in the innovation economy and reskill those whose jobs have been—or will be—disrupted by technology.

Apprenticeships also are an important vehicle for helping individuals reskill or make a mid-career switch. As technology continues to disrupt industries and change the talent requirements, there is a growing need to establish a strong foundation supporting apprenticeships for professional roles.

Background

Accenture, recognizes the important role professional apprenticeships can play in closing the skills gap in North America. Through their apprenticeship program, the company is reaching untapped talent pools, prioritizing potential, providing greater access to digital economy jobs and helping reskill workers whose jobs have been, or will be, disrupted by technology.

In collaboration with Aon, the Chicago Apprentice Network and Business Roundtable, Accenture launched the [Apprenticeship Playbook](#) initiative to focus on the key steps, considerations, examples and case studies for apprenticeships in professional positions. The Playbook is designed to help other employers create professional apprenticeship programs based on the best practices Accenture established in their own successful model. They hope the Playbook will enable other companies to join the national movement for professional apprenticeship programs and help create a more inclusive, innovation economy.

Outcomes

The goal of the learn-and-earn program is to expand Accenture's hiring channels and to create new career pathways for talented individuals. In fiscal year 2022, as part of their commitment to scaling professional apprenticeships, Accenture

announced a goal for 20 percent of entry-level hiring to be apprentices. To date, more than 1,200 apprentices have participated in the program across more than 35 cities in the United States and Canada, with 575 individuals entering the program in 2021.

The goal is to provide ongoing career opportunities, and an overwhelming majority of apprentices who have participated stay with the company after completing the program. Many of the apprentices work both within our internal IT group and on client-facing work. They fill in-demand technology roles and other areas of our business including marketing and human resources.

Accenture's ambitions for the program go well beyond their own business. In collaboration with other companies and community partners, they are expanding the Apprentice Network model across the country, and have recently launched in Greater Washington, DC; Northern California; Massachusetts; Minnesota; Philadelphia; and Houston. These networks facilitate the sharing of ideas, lessons learned and best practices among peers in business, education, government and civic organizations.



Here are a few key data points from the program:

- In 2016, Accenture established its internal apprenticeship program. A year later they cofounded, along with Aon, the Chicago Apprentice Network, partnering with local employers like McDonald's, Zurich Insurance and Walgreens to jumpstart their professional apprenticeship programs.
- Today, the Chicago Apprenticeship Network has 70+ member organizations and has well exceeded its initial goal to create 1,000+ apprenticeships.
- Building off the success of the Chicago Apprentice Network, Accenture will lead the development of a nationwide network of partners to create 10,000 apprenticeships across the United States by 2030.
- The impact the apprenticeship program has created extends beyond the individuals who participate in it; their families' lives are often positively impacted. And it's even more relevant today than ever as COVID-19 continues to disproportionately affect those without college and high school degrees.

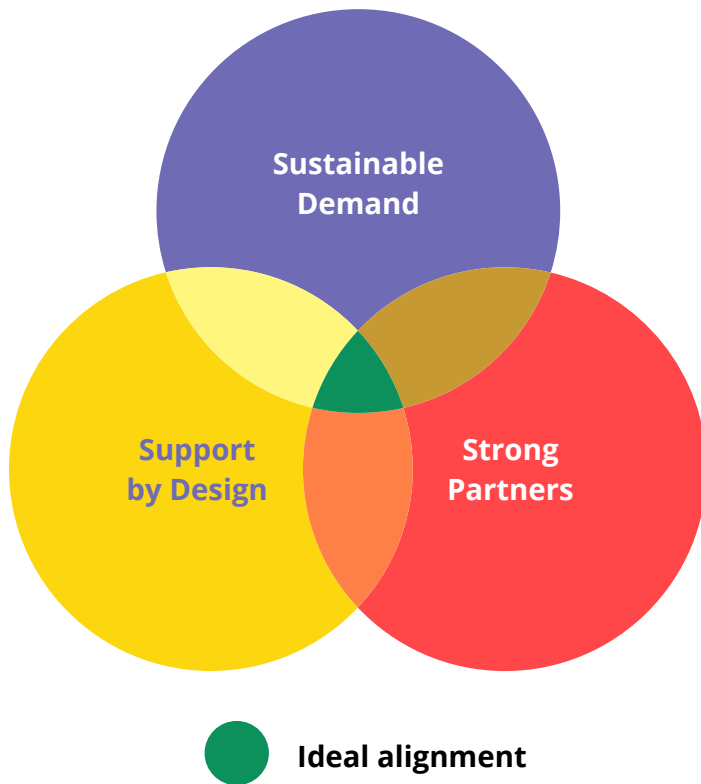
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These pathways to employment and a more inclusive workforce are a powerful example of how we can truly make a difference for our businesses, our communities and the people in our communities,” said Julie Sweet, CEO of Accenture.

”

How to get started

For a program to be successful, it needs to have three key elements—a real need for talent in the organization, a supportive environment and strong partnerships.



Sustainable demand

Sustainable Demand Roles should address talent needs aligned to the future of work, anchored to positions with on-going career opportunity beyond the apprenticeship and embedded into hiring plans and recruiting practices to be sustainable over time.

Support by design

C-suite leadership support is critical to success, reinforced day-to-day with strong team mentorship to deliver high-touch shadowing and professional development, and a robust apprentice cohort structure to enhance community building.

Strong partners

Strong partnerships with educational institutions, nonprofits and other community partners provide access to high potential candidates from untapped talent pools and additional support for training and wraparound services where needed.



Innovative Usage of QR Codes Drives Recruitment

Opening new recruiting channels



Participant Information

Partner: Schnitzer Steel

Program: Sourcing Efforts

Goal: Grow applicant pool

Focus Area: Sourcing

Time worked on initiative: Multiple years

Making use of technology to increase potential hires

Schnitzer Steel has dozens of metal and automobile recycling retail sites across the United States. In recent years, they've made heavy use of QR codes for a variety of purposes. They have signage in multiple areas as well as flyers to capture as many walk-in customers as possible. As they seek talent, they realized that those customers are a potential talent pool for them, and they decided to make use of QR codes to interest potential applicants.

Background

Schnitzer Steel wanted to grow their applicant pool for all open and potential positions, and in a dynamic and competitive labor market, innovative means of engaging applicants is critical. To address this, they decided to try and capitalize on their in-store traffic by placing QR codes about employment throughout their stores. Scanning a code takes users to a career website, only showing open jobs from the location where a user scanned the QR code. This means the potential candidate doesn't need to work their way through a broad range of postings and instead can focus on what jobs are available in their area.

Outcomes

At the outset of the initiative, Schnitzer hoped to enhance their applicant pool while fostering a growing and engaging culture and developing their workforce from within. While the program has not driven up recruitment by a large margin, it has successfully converted many walk-in customers to employees and gained referrals to their friends or family members who may be looking for new opportunities.



Case in Point

Using collected knowledge to build simplicity

Sometimes it's the simple things. Through the Innovation Working Group, member company Schnitzer Steel, Inc. encountered dozens of resources for the first time: from community job boards to vocational programs to community outreach initiatives. Erich Wilson, Schnitzer's Chief Human Resources Officer, wondered: What if there was a one-stop-shop repository of all these resources, channels and contacts? Could he harness the collective knowledge into something simple, searchable and sortable?

The answer was a resounding, "yes." With a nudge from Opportunity@Work's Matt Fortier, Wilson co-created what is essentially a spreadsheet, at least for now.

Wilson and members of the Opportunity@Work team started by capturing and categorizing existing contacts from Schnitzer Steel to present a model for input from the group. Once they received feedback on a document, they solicited working group members to populate a list with community colleges, high schools, online training providers, job platforms, newsletters and any other sourcing partners that could help companies strategically expand their talent pipeline. Wilson explains: "It's basically a data repository on what all of us have used, knowing that we don't have all the connections."

Member companies will be invited to add their own resources and relevant contact information, and then tag content by industry, geography, diversity focus (e.g., veterans, women) or training type to help users looking to meet specific needs. The hope is that this tool will get refreshed regularly. How will Schnitzer Steel define success for the tool? For Wilson it's uncomplicated even if intangible: "I know from doing this work for 30 years that it's almost impossible to put a dollar amount on it.

But by going through this exercise, we will have fewer open jobs, less overtime for existing employees, more work-life balance, more rewarding experiences and a lot of other downstream benefits that are hard to quantify. I know that without creating this collaborative tool, we would have some lost synergies."

That said, there is one easy internal metric for success: "We can monitor who we hire and whether they came from any of the resources on this list. We wouldn't have known these candidates without the list." It's just one small way to add data smarts when diversifying a talent pipeline.

What may be even more important than items on a list is the relationship with the person behind the line item and the connections built over the 12 months of the working group. Wilson is confident: "Even if data become stale, the relationships will never erode. These people are now part of my professional network. I hope it goes both ways."

Wilson admits that neither the working group nor this nascent tool are "earth shattering." But sometimes all you need is to hear that others are struggling too and get a glimpse into innovations that peer companies (even competitors!) are contemplating. Julie Flowers, working group co-chair and Chevron's Head of Global Talent Acquisition, adds: "We've created an amazing compendium of knowledge and best practices, a strong external network with solid relationships and a jump start on some game-changing programs."

There is no silver bullet to address hiring challenges. But sharing even small tools and solutions can help companies alleviate pressure. The spirit of generosity is what makes these networks valuable.

Found in Translation

Posting roles in multiple languages opens new talent pools



Participant Information

Partner: Schnitzer Steel

Program: Job ad translation

Goal: Improve recruitment of bilingual and Spanish-speaking workers

Focus Area: Sourcing

Time worked on initiative: Several years

Expanding recruitment to bilingual talent

In an effort to grow their applicant pool across demographics, Schnitzer Steel implemented a program to translate English-language job descriptions into Spanish to help them source bilingual talent. In addition, where Schnitzer employs a Spanish-speaking manager, they also source for monolingual (Spanish) talent.



Background

As with their QR code initiative, Schnitzer wanted to grow their applicant pool for all open and potential positions and realized that broadening that pool of applicants as much as possible would help fill open positions. Realizing that they had not tapped a large pool of potential skilled applicants, they began posting job positions in multiple languages.

Outcomes

Schnitzer hoped that by translating their job postings into Spanish, they would grow their applicant pool and foster a strong and engaging culture. In key target markets where bilingual or monolingual talent is needed, Schnitzer has been able to fill positions quickly by posting fully translated job ads on high-traffic, diverse job boards.

How to get started

Ensure you've got an effective translator to ensure that nuances of postings aren't lost. In addition, postings need to be engaging and attractive in all languages; Schnitzer found that a strong translator is critical for this need and to ensure they attract a large population of potential applicants.

Re-targeting Applicants at Job Fairs and Events

Expanding use of ATS systems to improve talent pipelines



Participant Information

Partner: Schnitzer Steel

Program: Reskilling

Goal: Re-engage past applicants and their networks through geographical outreach

Focus Area: Sourcing

Time worked on initiative: Multiple years

Making use of geography to re-engage applicants

Schnitzer Steel often hosts or participates in job fairs and similar events to try and attract and retain talent. To expand their talent pipeline, they began to deploy a re-engagement strategy for past applicants and for workers who expressed interest in the past. They send email and text blasts based on geographic location when they hold open-interview events and invite current and past applicants to join Schnitzer, if the applicants are still in the market.

Outcomes

Schnitzer has had positive turnouts at job fair events at their sites. They've found that even if someone who receives outreach from us is no longer in the market, they share this information with their network, and we've had several referrals show up to job fairs.

How to get started

Make use of applicant tracking systems to maintain a distribution list of past applicants who indicated they are willing to receive future outreach from the company.



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- Schnitzer Steel
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