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Entry-Level
Learn-and-Earn (ELLE)
Toolkit for Implementation

How to Use This **Toolkit**

Learn best practices from others	**Follow step-by-step action plans for implementation**
Engage the right partners	**Access tools and find resources**

Designed for manufacturers with immediate hiring needs, the entry-level learn-and-earn program (ELLE for short) brings together regional partners to recruit, pre-screen, and train new hires. ELLE is intended to make it easier for manufacturers to hire and onboard entry-level employees who have no prior manufacturing experience.

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How to Use This **Toolkit**

Learn best practices from others	**Follow step-by-step action plans for implementation**
Engage the right partners	**Access tools and find resources**

The toolkit is designed so that project managers can execute the ELLE program for one company or multiple companies (e.g., members of an industry sector partnership).

As a project manager, you'll need to know a bit about learn-and-earn programs, your local workforce and education partners, and the companies with which you want to work.

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Program **Components**

ELLE highlights the five hallmarks of high-quality learn-and-earn programs:

Related Technical Instruction	**Nationally Portable Credential**	**Paid Work-Based Learning**	**On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Mentorship**	**Safety, Supervision, and Equal Opportunity**

Participants complete one to two weeks of classroom training that covers safety and soft skills.

After completing training, participants take the Manufacturing Skill Standard Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT) Safety Module exam.

Participants are placed in a 90-day paid training period with a manufacturer that provides mentorship in a safe, supervised, and equitable workplace. The process is designed so that the placement results in an offer of permanent employment.

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Participant **Experience**

Recruiting

Potential program participants are recruited through community-based organizations and exposed to manufacturing jobs.

Pre-Screening

Participants go through an orientation and pre-screening process to help ensure they're a good fit for the hiring company.

Pre-Employment Training

Participants complete a short (1-2 week) technical training program that prepares them to take the MSSC Safety Module exam and exposes them to soft skills needed in the workplace.

Job Placement

Participants who successfully complete a pre-employment interview with a manufacturer are placed in a paid, 90-day on-the-job training period.
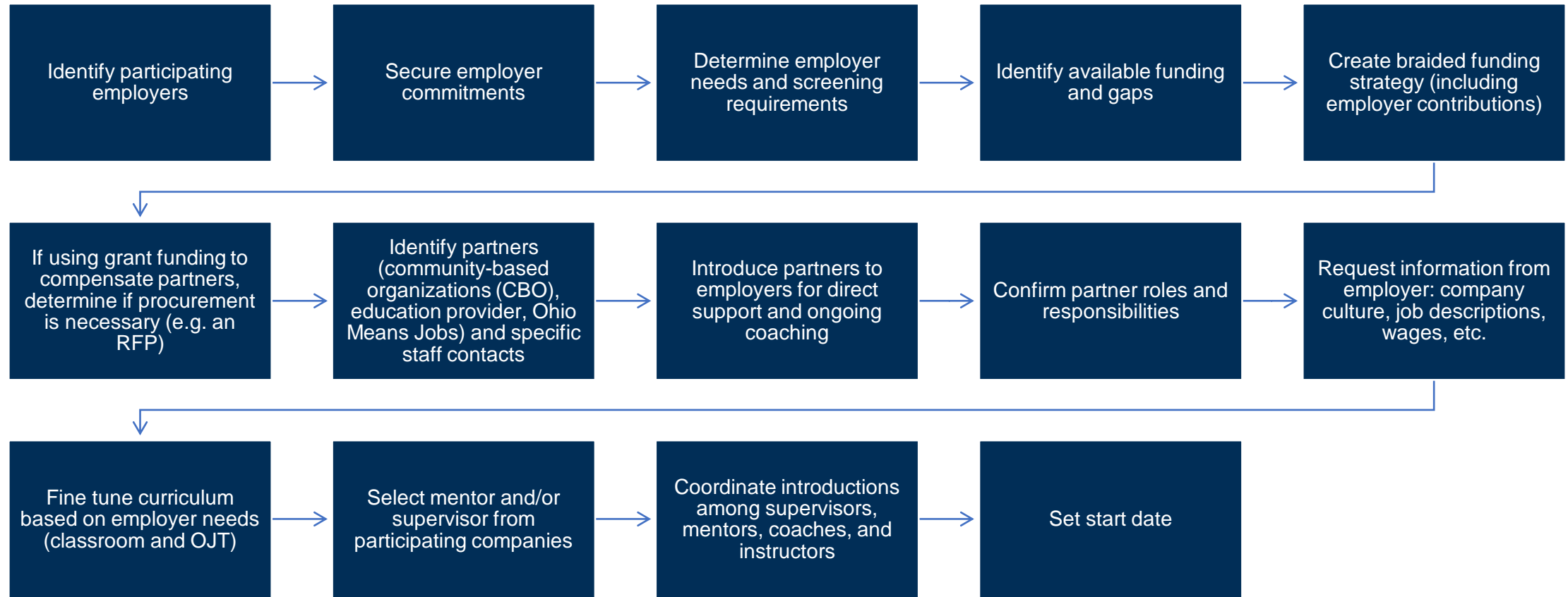
On-the-Job Training & Support

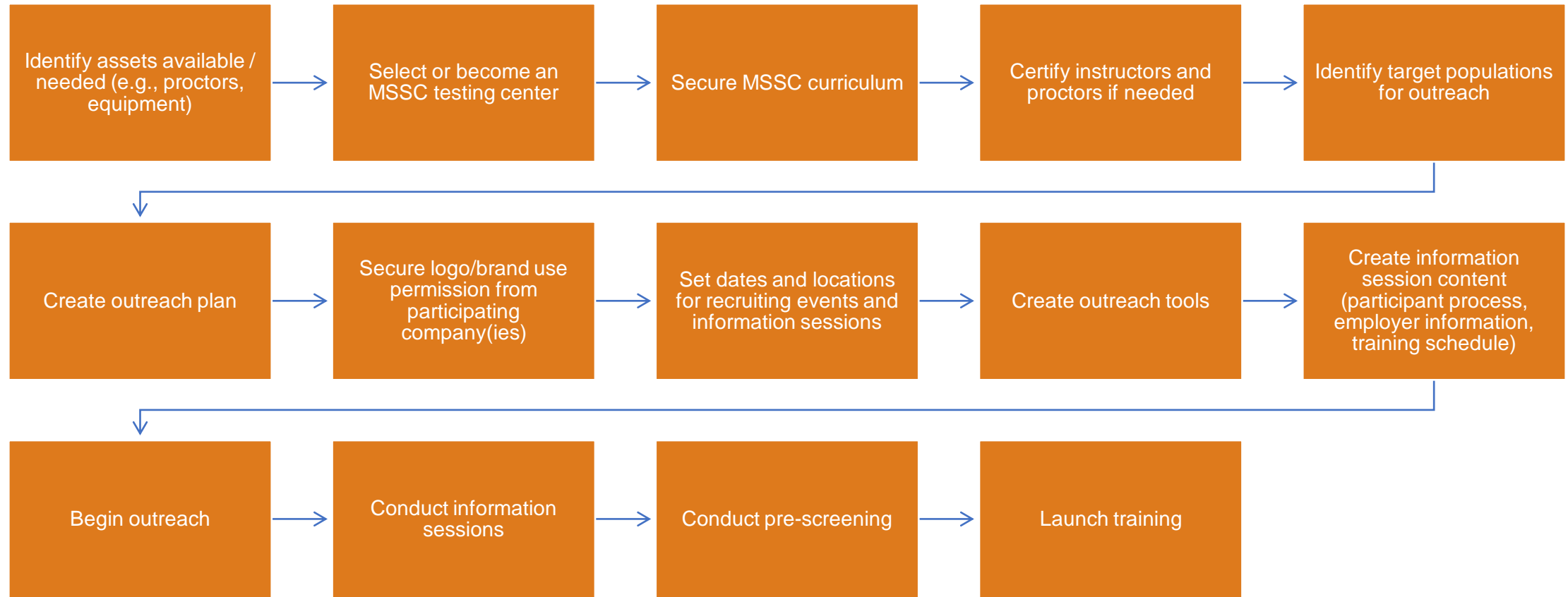Participants complete the 90-day OJT period while continuing to receive wraparound support from a coach.

Workflow for **Project Managers** (pre-launch)

For best results, follow this process in order:

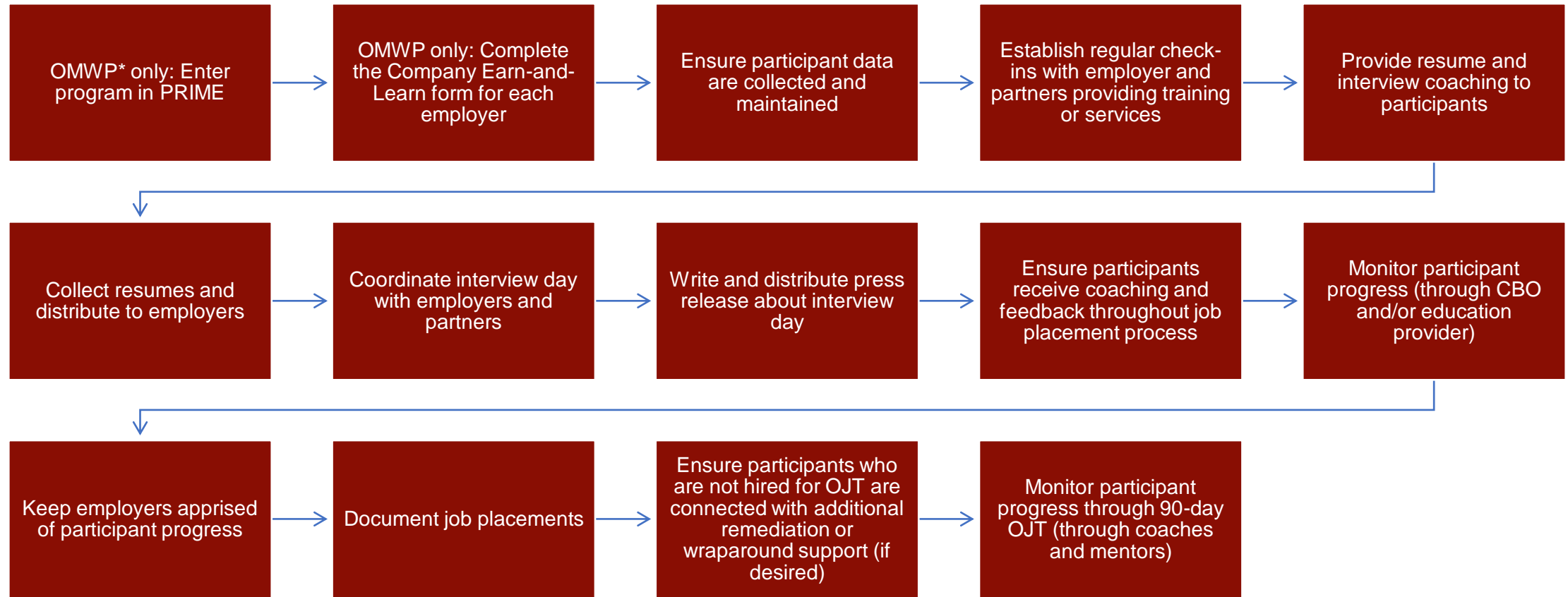|				
Identify participating employers	Secure employer commitments	Determine employer needs and screening requirements	Identify available funding and gaps	Create braided funding strategy (including employer contributions)
If using grant funding to compensate partners, determine if procurement is necessary (e.g. an RFP)	Identify partners (community-based organizations (CBO), education provider, Ohio Means Jobs) and specific staff contacts	Introduce partners to employers for direct support and ongoing coaching	Confirm partner roles and responsibilities	Request information from employer: company culture, job descriptions, wages, etc.
Fine tune curriculum based on employer needs (classroom and OJT)	Select mentor and/or supervisor from participating companies	Coordinate introductions among supervisors, mentors, coaches, and instructors	Set start date	

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Workflow for **Project Managers** (pre-launch)

For best results, follow this process in order:

Identify assets available / needed (e.g., proctors, equipment)	→ Select or become an MSSC testing center	→ Secure MSSC curriculum	→ Certify instructors and proctors if needed	→ Identify target populations for outreach
Create outreach plan	→ Secure logo/brand use permission from participating company(ies)	→ Set dates and locations for recruiting events and information sessions	→ Create outreach tools	→ Create information session content (participant process, employer information, training schedule)
Begin outreach	→ Conduct information sessions	→ Conduct pre-screening	→ Launch training	

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Workflow for **Project Managers** (pre-launch)

For best results, follow this process in order:

OMWP* only: Enter program in PRIME	OMWP only: Complete the Company Earn-and-Learn form for each employer	Ensure participant data are collected and maintained	Establish regular check-ins with employer and partners providing training or services	Provide resume and interview coaching to participants
Collect resumes and distribute to employers	Coordinate interview day with employers and partners	Write and distribute press release about interview day	Ensure participants receive coaching and feedback throughout job placement process	Monitor participant progress (through CBO and/or education provider)
Keep employers apprised of participant progress	Document job placements	Ensure participants who are not hired for OJT are connected with additional remediation or wraparound support (if desired)	Monitor participant progress through 90-day OJT (through coaches and mentors)	

* The Ohio Manufacturing Workforce Partnership (OMWP) is a collaboration of The Ohio Manufacturers' Association and Ohio TechNet.

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Regional **Readiness**

ELLE is a collaborative workforce solution—so before you get started, make sure that your partners are ready to work with you.

Industry Leadership

Which companies are hiring right now, and are they willing to try something new? Do you have a strong relationship with the decision makers who can spearhead a program like this? Get them on board today.

Community-Based Organizations

Goodwill, Catholic Charities, Community Action Agencies, the Urban League, and many other nonprofit organizations are skilled at providing outreach, pre-screening, coaching, and case management to adults completing employment training. You'll need to partner with at least one of these organizations to launch ELLE.

Public Workforce System

The Ohio Means Jobs Center(s) in your region can help find dislocated workers, connect trainees to funding, and provide other relevant services. Make sure they're engaged early to reap the most benefit.

Education Providers

You'll need a provider to deliver the MSSC and soft-skills training, and a place to do it. Community Colleges and Ohio Technical Centers are great options.

A note to OMWP project managers: Your role in ELLE is to convene the right partners and let them shine. Throughout the program, you'll oversee the partners' work and monitor progress, ensuring that all grant-related data are captured and reported, and that all spending is compliant with federal guidelines. Don't hesitate to delegate the day-to-day program operations to a partner with capacity. Ensure the scope of work is clear with respect to each partner's responsibilities.

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Regional **Readiness**

Tools for industry leadership:

- Employer Partner Checklist (sample)

- Employer Partner Slide Deck (sample)

Tools for project managers:

- Resource map – funding a program like this can be complex. This resource map illustrates of how one region identified public programs that were braided together to offset the cost of training and support.

MANUFACTURERS' CORNER
Your role in program development is key. It's far easier to recruit program participants when they have specific information about your company and the actual job they might secure at the end of technical training. Therefore, the project manager will be asking you to make a commitment early in the planning process. Can you commit to interviewing, and potentially hiring, all program participants who successfully complete the technical training? If yes, the project manager will collect detailed information from you to design the program to meet your needs.

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Recruiting **Talent**

ELLE is designed to bring more people into the manufacturing talent pipeline through grassroots, community-based outreach. Partner with organizations that serve the communities you want to attract.

To do:

- Select community-based organizations (CBOs). (Note: if using grant funds, be sure to follow applicable procurement policy).

- Confirm <u>roles and responsibilities</u> of CBO/Project Manager.

- Schedule recruiting events (career fairs, information sessions, open houses, etc.).

- <u>Create/customize recruiting tools</u>.

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Recruiting **Talent**

What information do you need from the hiring businesses?

- Job descriptions

- Wages and benefits

- Company culture

- Internal career pathways

- Ideal candidate qualifications

- Permission to use logo/brand for outreach efforts

  - Many companies have a formal process to approve logo/brand use. Identify requirements and secure all necessary approvals prior to launching your recruitment strategy.

MANUFACTURERS' CORNER

Your partners' recruiting efforts will be more successful if you're able to share clear, detailed information about the jobs participants may be placed in and the culture of your company. Think of this as an opportunity to show off. What products do you make? (Share videos!) What do your current employees love about working for your company? How do you give back to your community? What growth opportunities wait for someone who successfully completes this program? Job quality is of the utmost importance here.

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Recruiting **Talent**

Together with the hiring companies, create a candidate profile. This will help determine which population(s) to target and with which CBOs to partner.

- Graduating high school seniors (not going to college)

- Formerly incarcerated adults (returning citizens)

- Women

- People of Color

- Veterans

- Un- and underemployed adults

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From Recruiting to **Screening**

There are typically several touchpoints for each candidate before the OJT training period begins. Each of these is an opportunity for program staff to begin to pre-screen participants and to expose them to the soft skills expected by hiring managers.

Awareness Building

Social media, flyers, paid ads (e.g. radio/streaming service), one-on-one recruiting from case manager

Information Session / Orientation

Attend one-hour information session at training location, learn about training program, manufacturing careers (general) and job opportunities (specific), speak with program staff and/or employer representatives

Enroll

Complete intake interview and paperwork, assessments, and any other pre-screening required

Screen for **Fitness and Aptitude**

MANUFACTURERS' CORNER

During the program design phase, it's critical that you are involved in shaping the program acceptance criteria and pre-screening process. Consider the following questions:

- What behaviors, skills, and knowledge enable your best employees to excel?

- What work do your employees enjoy doing?

- Describe a scenario in which an employee exhibited behaviors that are appropriate and effective in your company (e.g. motivation, determination, perseverance, etc.).

- What reading and math skills does a person need to have to succeed in the job?

Screen for **Fitness and Aptitude**

Make it easier for manufacturers to hire the right people by screening interested individuals before training even begins.

In the previous section, you created a candidate profile. The profile becomes the basis for your pre-screening plan. Everyone who works with participants—case managers, coaches, and instructors—are part of the process; share the profile for everyone to be on the same page.

Aspects to consider:

Literacy

Digital Literacy

Math / Numeracy / Measurement

Mechanical Aptitude

Manufacturing Awareness

Motivation

Communication

Punctuality / Attendance
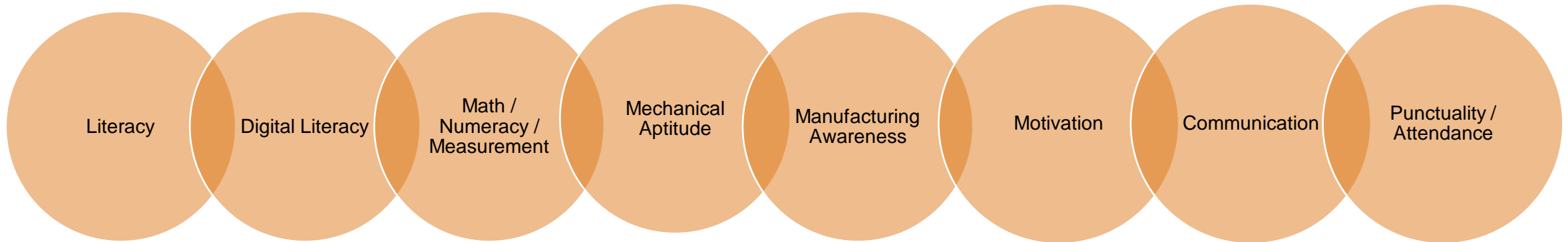
Screen for **Fitness and Aptitude**

If the hiring company has additional pre-hire requirements, include those in your pre-screening process as well. These might include:

- Background check

- Drug screen*

- Physical ability/lifting requirements
    - Be sure that all screening requirements are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Some federal funding sources cannot be used to pay for drug screening. Be sure to consider this when building your funding strategy.

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Screen for **Fitness and Aptitude** - Tools

- NorthStar Digital Literacy Tool – tests computer skills https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/

- WorkKeys measures foundational skills required for success in the workplace http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workkeys-for-employers/assessments.html

- Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) is an academic assessment used with adults who do not have a high school diploma or GED or who have been out of school for an extended period. https://tabetest.com/

- Your local Ohio Means Jobs and/or ASPIRE can help you select the right assessments tools.

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Screen for **Fitness and Aptitude –** A Best Practice

<u>MyStory</u> is a writing / self-reflection exercise created by MAGNET for its ACCESS program that gives candidates/participants an opportunity to respond to the screening criteria in their own words. Candidates will answer questions such as:

- What makes you a good candidate for the program? Give me an example from your life that supports your statement.

- Being successful requires setting and achieving goals. Tell me about a goal that you set for yourself and achieved.

- Describe a situation in which a job was not completed by quitting time. What did you do?

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Technical **Training**

Participants who've successfully moved through the pre-screening process will begin technical training.

The core of technical training is the MSSC CPT Safety Module. Curriculum is available for purchase.

It's important to infuse the technical training with opportunities for participants to build their soft skills. Try these:

- Imitate the workplace – Require students to punch in and out, arrive on time and stay all day, dress appropriately, etc.

- Demystify the "unwritten rules" of the industry – Why is safety so important? How does attendance impact the business's bottom line? What's a production schedule and why does it matter? How do you create a productive, supportive relationship with your supervisor?

OMWP Project Managers: Individuals become grant participants when training begins. Be sure to enter their information in the PRIME system today!

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Technical **Training** - Why MSSC?

The Manufacturing Skills Standards Council's (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT) curriculum covers the general knowledge and skills required of entry level applicants for manufacturing, regardless of the occupational sub-sector of the company.

CPT does not try to focus on any one type of manufacturing, but instead focuses on more general areas of knowledge and application of knowledge.

As far as curriculum goes, the CPT standards were developed with the input of more than 350 educators and manufacturers from across the nation establishing the "common denominators" needed in manufacturing regardless of the product being produced. This assured that entry level skills in the area of chemical manufacturing were the same as in metal forming and joining.

MSSC does not require significant investment in equipment, and most manufacturing training facilities have all the equipment and tools needed (specialized equipment is available through various vendors if desired).

The MSSC CPT is made up of four modules, each of which takes about one week to complete and has a standalone certificate: 1) Safety, 2) Quality and Measurement, 3) Manufacturing Processes, 4) Maintenance Awareness. An individual must complete all four modules and assessments to become a Certified Production Technician; however, each module is considered a standalone industry recognized credential.

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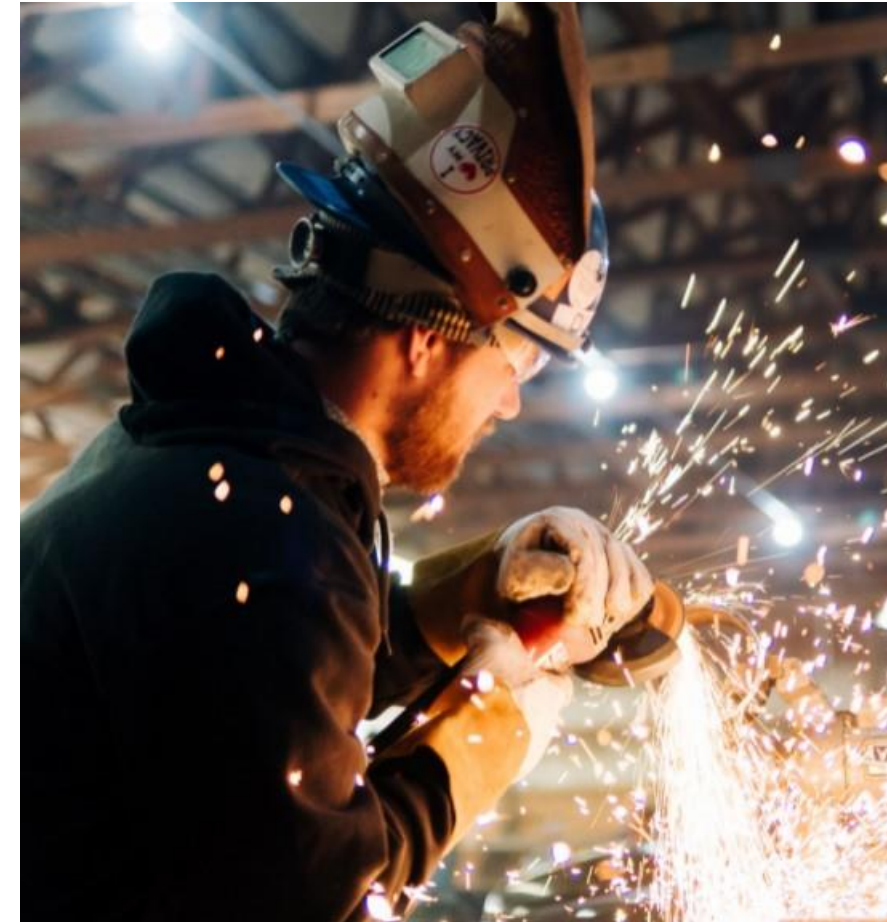
Technical **Training** - Tools

- MSSC locations: https://www.msscusa.org/locations/

- MSSC Step-by-step guide for post-secondary institutions

- MSSC Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Outlines

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Job **Matching** and **Placement**

After participants have been recruited, screened, and entered training, the project manager and/or partners will begin to match participants with permanent employment. This should happen concurrently with technical training to ensure placement immediately following training.

- Provide company profiles and job descriptions to participants

- Offer resume review and interview coaching

- Collect and distribute resumes to hiring managers

- Coordinate an interview day(s) (consider location—can multiple employers come to a central location for "speed-style" interviews with multiple participants?)

- Introduce CBO/case managers to hiring managers to facilitate ongoing coaching and wraparound support

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Job **Matching** and **Placement**

MANUFACTURERS' CORNER

Right now, there are more open jobs than people looking for them, so program participants will likely have several placement options to consider. Be sure to make the interview process welcoming and inclusive. Some things to consider:

- **Company Culture:** What makes your employees want to come to work every day? Do they feel a sense of purpose? Will new hires feel welcome and respected? Describe in detail.

- **Open Communication:** Building trust with job candidates is important, especially when you're recruiting people who are from backgrounds that are underrepresented in manufacturing. Let them know specifically what your expectations are and what they can expect in return.

- **Job Security and Growth:** Since many people lost jobs or were furloughed during the COVID-19 pandemic, candidates may want assurance that their next job is a steady one. Share how your business is doing financially, who your customers are, and what your growth goals are for the next few years. Help them see how they can become a part of that growth.

- **Job Quality:** Is the job you're trying to fill a good one? Check out these tools on Job Design to find out.

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On-the-Job **Training**

- <u>A core element of any learn-and-earn program is structured on-the-job training. Participants need to complete a clearly mapped out set of learning objectives (often referred to as a work-process schedule or on-the-job training checklist) under the supervision and guidance of a qualified mentor.</u>

- During the program design phase, project managers should work with employers to refine an MSSC-related work-process schedule. The final product will be a customized checklist that gives participants the opportunity to practice what they learned in technical training and become familiar with their specific job.

- Mentoring requires its own set of skills. Refer companies to the Mentor Earn-and-Learn program if they don't already have qualified mentors available.

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Ongoing Wraparound **Support**

- Often, new hires' greatest challenges have less to do with the job and more to do with what's happening in the rest of their lives. By working with community-based organizations that offer case management and wraparound support, you can access resources to help participants address barriers and, therefore, reduce absenteeism and turnover for employers.

- Think of your case managers and career coaches as an extension of the hiring company's HR team. Together, they can help new employees thrive and even advance into higher-skilled, higher compensated roles.

- Support might include: referral to other services (e.g., SNAP, childcare, health care), gas cards or other transportation assistance, coaching on conflict resolution or communication.

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