



CROSS-TRAINING HANDBOOK

Municipal Pilot Project

Northumberland County

2021



Views expressed in this publication are the views of The Community Training & Development Centre and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.



CROSS-TRAINING

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CROSS-TRAINING

DEFINITION^{1 2}

Cross-training involves teaching an employee necessary skills required to fill various job functions within the organization. Structuring a formal program organizes the training process and develops a multi-skilled labour force.

Employees involved in cross-training programs become skilled at tasks outside the usual parameters of their jobs and thus become greater assets for the company while gaining knowledge and skills that benefit them personally.

BENEFITS

A well-designed cross-training program will reduce costs, improve employee morale and productivity, and reduce employee turnover. Cross-training reduces administrative burden and gives more flexibility with scheduling. Perhaps the most important benefit seen in companies that implement cross-training programs is greater job satisfaction among employees, particularly with millennials. The training shows that a company is invested in the employees' professional development.

- Enhances company reputation, attracting young workers
- Promotes employee longevity, reducing turnover
- Creates flexible and skilled workforce
- Production isn't adversely affected due to one worker's absence
- Builds strong teams
- Enables employers to hire internally
- Preps employees to take on more challenging roles in the future
- Unlocks previously unknown skills and strengths, allowing employees to reach their full potential
- Motivates employees, engages them in their work and boosts productivity
- Promotes goal setting and continuous learning

In addition to the benefits companies must be educated about potential security risks due to increased sharing of files and passwords between staff. There is also potential for training programs to cause employee overwhelm or burn-out and breed unhealthy workplace competition.

¹ inc.com/encyclopedia/cross-training.html

² kbmanage.com/concept/cross-training

CROSS-TRAINING

CROSS-TRAINING METHODS ^{3 4 5}

PRE-EMPTIVE CROSS-TRAINING occurs when employees are trained in various tasks or specific skills in preparation for an unforeseen absence of a coworker, or to fill another role in the company down the road

ON-THE-JOB LEARNING occurs when employees are given a role or have to step in unexpectedly to a new position. This might occur because another employee quits or needs to leave a company immediately

Cross-trained employees are likely to forget new skills if not given the opportunity to use and practice them on a regular basis. Technology and work policies could also change rapidly and if not communicated will leave the cross-trained employee confused and ill prepared when stepping in to the new role. Guarantee a smooth transition by cross-training only the skills employees can use regularly in their current jobs.

In addition to a formal cross-training program, the following are also effective tools to build a culture of skill-sharing and continuous learning:

MENTORING - once an employee has gone through a cross training program, ask them to continue in the program as mentors for new trainees. This reinforces their skills by having them teach it to others, while creating a positive incentive for learning the material

CORPORATE TRAINERS are typically intra-company focused, meaning they have training modules that employees can use in pursuit of cross-functional skills. The training they provide will be relevant to the needs of the company

BUDDY SYSTEM is essentially a friendly and informal skill and knowledge exchange between coworkers.

DIGITAL / ONLINE - DAPs (Digital Adoption Platforms) and MOOCs (Massive Online Open Source Courses) *Khan Acadmey, Coursera, MIT OpenCourseWare, edX*

³ theuncommonleague.com/blog/20171128/benefits-of-cross-training-in-business-builds-strong-teams-and-versatility

⁴ theuncommonleague.com/blog/20171128/15-tips-to-launch-a-cross-training-program-in-your-company

⁵ iltanet.org/blogs/michael-callier/2017/05/03/developing-cross-functional-skills-in-a-changing-world

CROSS-TRAINING

STRUCTURING A CROSS-TRAINING PROGRAM⁶

To be effective, a cross-training program must be planned and organized in advance. The very first step in planning a cross-training program is to gather a task force of both management and employees who will research the pros and cons of cross-training for the company, assess the feasibility of setting up a program, work out the implementation issues and set up a realistic schedule for each position.

Communicate clearly with staff the reason for cross-training and the benefits. Showing the employees that cross-training represents an integral part of their overall development plan will remove suspicions that the program is designed to eliminate jobs or a particular staff member. Creating a recognition and reward program for employees who have satisfactorily finished cross-training is a great way to get them excited and invested in the training.⁷

Key Points to Consider⁸

- Who will be eligible for training?
- Will the training be mandatory or voluntary?
- Will training be administered internally or through an external firm?
- How can cross-trained staff help company goals, while also impacting individual targets?
- Which employees are most ready for a cross-training exercise?
- What factors will determine whether an employee is fit for the training?
- Are there specific positions and roles within the organization that should be targeted by the program?
- How will the benefits of program participation be effectively communicated?
- How can employees be inspired to accept and embrace the plan?
- Is cross-training enough to prepare for possible vacancies and emerging business requirements?

⁶ inc.com/encyclopedia/cross-training.html

⁷ areadevelopment.com/laborEducation/O1-2013/implementing-cross-training-hot-back-ups-37372612.shtml

⁸ Why Cross-Training Programs are Crucial to Your Succession Planning - hrtechnologist.com

CROSS-TRAINING

First Steps ⁹¹⁰

An effective cross-training program will strengthen teams, give employees more opportunities to advance, and create staffing overlap in areas of the business that are critical to operation. Key team members can leave a company at any moment for a number of reasons. Therefore it is crucial to prepare in advance for unforeseen challenges such as staffing shortages, emergencies such as a sudden death or illness, or an event that impacts normal day-to-day operations.

- Instruct departments to create a list of functions and tasks that are necessary to their day-to-day operations
- Prioritize the tasks and identify the specific and critical ones for which cross-training is needed
- Have employees currently in those roles review the lists of functions and tasks and identify which ones they already know how to do, which ones they would like to learn, and which ones they would be willing to learn
- Identify team members who will be capable of performing the cross-training task. Match the skill set and learning capability of the people to be cross-trained with the skills required for a particular position
- Create a staffing master list from this feedback and update it as staff progress through the training. This allows for quick placement of appropriately trained staff in the roles that may need to be filled temporarily
- Decide on the methods of cross-training that will be used: buddy system, mentorship and/or top-down training from supervisors
- Incorporate teacher or mentorship training, if needed, for the staff who will be in charge of cross-training their coworkers
- Always train more than one employee in various components of a job to ensure overlap of skills, knowledge and hands-on experience
- Allow trained employees time to absorb the new information, reduce their workload during cross-training and evaluate their progress on a regular basis

⁹ insperity.com/blog/cross-training-staff

¹⁰ areadevelopment.com/laborEducation/Q1-2013/implementing-cross-training-hot-back-ups-37372612.shtml

CROSS-TRAINING

Implementation Checklist ¹¹

- Define the goal of the program
- Explain cross-training, company goals and the benefits to employees
- Manage and address staff concerns
- Conduct company and department wide critical tasks assessment
- Create master list to track cross-training tasks and employee progress
- Select which training methods will be used
 - Pre-emptive
 - On-the-job
 - Instructor-led/corporate trainers (internal or external)
 - Buddy System
 - Mentorship
 - ELearning/Online Resources (DAPs, MOOC, custom LMS)
 - Select and match trainers with trainees
- Outline the company, trainers' and trainees' roles and responsibilities
- Rotate tasks to retain the knowledge of cross-trained employees
- Method in place to receive regular feedback from trainers and trainees

Note: It is often easiest to cross-train team members who work in similar roles, keep in mind that it can also be useful for people to learn about roles that are very different from the one they're currently working in¹²

¹¹ insperity.com/blog/cross-training-staff

¹² mindtools.com/pages/article/cross-training.htm

CROSS-TRAINING

Digital Training & Software ¹³

A digital-first mindset is crucial for maintaining a productive workforce. Technological innovation creates massive improvements in products, services, and experiences but it's also a disruption to the workplace as the pace of change is simply too great for many organizations to keep up. Companies are now forced to digitally mature and evolve in order to stay relevant and competitive. Digital dexterity, digital maturity, and agility are key traits that can help an organization succeed and thrive in a digital era. To attain such results, organizations must ensure that their employees are properly trained and equipped.

DIGITAL ADOPTION PLATFORMS (DAPs) are training solutions designed specifically for today's digitally maturing organization. They enable users to be cross-trained automatically with various in-app tools such as, step-by-step walkthroughs where the learner is guided through a series of tasks or product tours where the learner is quickly introduced to a product's functions and capabilities. With a DAP, companies can also automate repetitive software tasks, freeing up employee time for more valuable work.

With built in software analytics, DAPs can monitor employee interactions on the platform, helping trainers better understand employees' training needs, spot errors and enforce corrective action more quickly, further improving workplace efficiency and reducing long-term productivity issues.

DAPs use a number of training approaches including:

- Cross-training across platforms. DAPs such as *WalkMe* can train users on multiple platforms simultaneously, keeping the focus on workflows, rather than on individual tools.
- Micro-training is focused learning that teaches users only what they need to know, when they need it
- Contextualized teaching is when employees learn as they work, directly inside of their actual work context. This method increases understanding, and knowledge retention, allowing them to immediately apply what they have learned

¹³ digital-adoption.com/cross-training-employee

CROSS-TRAINING

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS) help in the development of an engaged, collaborative and skilled workforce. LMS platforms are training tools that can support and track employee training initiatives. Increasingly popular at large and small organizations, an LMS allows the business to train new employees and teams on a variety of topics and skills through ready-made content provided from the platform itself, such as Go1, or custom courses designed by the organization to target specific skill building. It can also be used to more efficiently onboard new hires. There are many LMS and training trackers available but to reap the benefits of eLearning, companies must first assess the needs of their employees, and consider their onboarding and cross-training requirements.¹⁴

A configurable LMS such as *Cornerstone OnDemand* creates a modern learner experience via curated content subscriptions, and collaborative learning options. With technology that is scalable, companies can create a library of content that constantly evolves, ensuring the business and employees stay relevant and competitive¹⁵ Some LMS platforms, such as Go1, provide ready-made content for users who do not have the need, or time, to create their own custom courses.

Digital Training Software:¹⁶

- [WalkMe](#) (DAP)
- [Nikelled](#) (DAP)
- [Spekit](#) (DAP for in-app training, onboarding, productivity and sales)
- [Apty](#) (DAP enterprise software adoption platform)
- [Cornerstone OnDemand](#) (LMS talent management software)
- [Go1](#) (eLearning library of curated courses from experts)
- [LinkedIn Learning](#) (eLearning library of business training courses)
- [Eloomi](#) (LMS)
- [Lessonly](#) (LMS)
- [Docebo Learning Suite](#) (LMS)
- [Talent LMS](#)

¹⁴ selectsoftwarereviews.com/buyer-guide/learning-management-systems

¹⁵ getapp.com/hr-employee-management-software/a/cornerstone-lms/

¹⁶ selectsoftwarereviews.com/buyer-guide/learning-management-systems

CROSS-TRAINING

Succession Planning^{17 18 19}

Research has shown that when executive positions are filled from outside an organization failure rates can be as high as 40-50%. Additionally, there is a cost associated with recruiting, hiring and training qualified outside staff. For these reasons cross-training could be considered as a viable strategy for succession planning.

A succession plan will identify high-level positions that are at risk of vacancy along with the current employees who have future leadership potential. Individuals can be cross-trained through strategies such as job shadowing and mentorship with the employee currently holding the position, who could be planning to retire in the near future.

The cross-training process begins by identifying the major tasks and skills in specific areas of the organization and then training each employee on these skills so that they can step in for support when needed. It builds the skills of everyone in the company and empowers employees to provide internal support, instead of outsourcing or overloading one group of employees during hectic times. There are three basic methods of cross-training:

HORIZONTAL - extends an employee's skill sets beyond their daily tasks by stretching their usual responsibilities to include those of other departments. Although not a direct route to promotion, this method does help to expose the employee to new roles and tasks that may be of interest to them.

ROTATIONAL - successful rotational training lies in coverage - everyone on a team should be able to perform everyone else's duties. Rotational cross-training prepares the business for unexpected loss or absence of key workers.

VERTICAL - this is the most common method of cross-training. The goal being to boost employee skills, pushing them forward towards the next stage of their careers. The worker is more likely to express a high level of engagement once they understand the importance of the plan, and their value to the company.

¹⁷ edgepointlearning.com/blog/cross-training-employees/

¹⁸ [Why Cross-Training Programs are Crucial to Your Succession Planning - hrtechnologist.com](https://hrtechnologist.com/Why-Cross-Training-Programs-are-Crucial-to-Your-Succession-Planning/)

¹⁹ themunicipal.com/2018/01/columbus-public-works-pulls-together-with-cross-training/

CROSS-TRAINING

Secondments^{20 21}

Secondments are also a great tool for employee retention. Also referred to as “job rotation”, they offer employees the opportunity to temporarily work on a different team within an organization, or in some cases, for a different organization entirely. Secondments are an excellent learning opportunity and can be thought of as the on-the-job equivalent of exchange student programs. The inherent value in up-skilling employees and the opportunity for continued learning boosts performance and cultivates a sense of well-being.

INTERNAL SECONDMENTS - are when employees stay within the company they currently work with, but are on loan to a different department or temporarily work in a different role. Immersing a worker in a new team to learn skills they want (or need) to work on is invaluable. It’s a fast-paced but practical learning process that is a valuable tool for quicker onboarding and effective cross-training. It increases company loyalty and decreases turnover as a result of workers being encouraged to learn about different parts of the business and develop skills outside of their current duties.

EXTERNAL SECONDMENTS - are when employees take a temporary role or project-based assignment at a different company. It could be a separate organization, a sister company, or simply a different branch of the same company perhaps in a different location. Companies often benefit from the fresh perspective they can gain via employees working temporarily on the outside. In order to stay competitive, progressive, and innovative, companies need to be adapting to changes in technology, trends, economy, and knowledge. One way that they can do this easily is by facilitating secondments in which they can then utilize the employee’s new knowledge and experiences when they return from the assignment. Employees benefit by expanding their professional network and knowledge base, and developing skills they wouldn’t otherwise be exposed to in their current role. Employees often return reinvigorated and able to apply their new skills to their current roles.

²⁰ atlassian.com/blog/teamwork/what-is-secondment-benefits

²¹ getcloudapp.com/blog/successful-secondment

Secondment Contracts ²²

To implement a successful secondment an effective agreement is mandatory. This contract must clearly outline the duration of the transfer and duties of the employee while on secondment. It is vital to get the host organization involved (external secondments) when drawing up the agreement as the role of the employee on secondment will need to be broad enough to cover all of the duties the host employer may ask them to perform. The day-to-day duties will need to be signed by all three parties: the company and their employee taking part in the secondment, and the host organization.

Internal secondments will require a different form of agreement between departments. If the duties of the employee on secondment are very different to the role they usually occupy, a temporary increase in salary or compensation will need to reflect this. Generally, the employer who is letting their employee go on secondment is the one that continues to pay the wages but there needs to be additional consideration of bonuses, expenses, overtime and training costs. It's also important that you agree in advance on absence and what sort of absences are acceptable. Clear communication and a thorough secondment will avoid confusion or disagreements down the road.

Steps for successful secondments:

- Running a secondment is as important as organizing it. Be clear and thorough when setting it up and maintain regular communication with the employee throughout the process
- Before accepting an employee for secondment, carefully assess their personal and professional situation. Stress, burnout and overwhelm could damage their performance or even cause them significant mental health issues. A good manager should consider these issues.
- Have a clear and signed contract that includes: duration, expectations, roles and responsibilities, management roles of employer and host, compensation, training, overtime and absences
- Provide an extensive explanation of the employee's role in the secondment, check-in with them regularly and clarify how they'll transition back into the organization. Regular feedback is key to their success.

²² perkbox.com - [Secondment: Everything Anyone Could Ever Want to Know](https://perkbox.com)

CROSS-TRAINING

Mentoring

One of the key benefits of mentorship programs is reducing employee turnover, the rates of which can be as high as 65% in some workplaces. This percentage can be even higher when workers are not feeling engaged with their department managers. Cross-generational, cross-departmental and cross-company mentoring are two methods that have proven to rekindle job satisfaction for both the mentor and the mentee. Both methods could allow for employees to experience and learn skills outside of their current roles and inspire them about possibilities for career growth across the company as a whole. When incorporated into a cross-training plan, these types of mentoring programs will improve productivity, build company loyalty and increase retention rates.

CROSS-GENERATIONAL MENTORING²³ - defined as pairing individuals from different generations with the goal of mutual learning and growth. Through this type of mentorship, multiple generations can share experiences, skills, knowledge creating a bridge between employees of all ages. This bridge will eliminate both the generation gap and the skills gap that exists between these groups.

As the baby boomer generation ages, they are steadily retiring and in some cases taking their knowledge with them. A solid succession plan with cross-training and mentorship are crucial in retaining this valuable knowledge and creating future leaders. Millennials who left an organization reported they would have stayed longer if given the opportunity to learn and grow through a mentorship program.

Internal networking is a vital part of career development. Similar to traditional mentoring, cross-generational mentoring will open up a lot of networking opportunities for both parties, expanding the networks of all generations through strategic meetings, events and coworkers.

The year 2020 is the first time in history where five different generations are currently in the workforce. Varying traits, beliefs, and life experiences mark each generation, influencing how they work, communicate, and respond to change.²⁴ Cross-generational mentorship can bridge these differences, bring in fresh perspectives, ideas, facilitate creative thinking and create more cohesive teams.

²³ [Epale.ec.europa.eu - Benefits of Cross Generational Mentoring](https://epale.ec.europa.eu/-Benefits-of-Cross-Generational-Mentoring)

²⁴ [Purdueglobal.edu - Generational Workforce Differences Infographic](https://purdueglobal.edu/-Generational-Workforce-Differences-Infographic)

CROSS-TRAINING

CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL MENTORING ²⁵ - The best mentors are not always found within the same department as the mentee. Workplaces that match mentors with mentees across various departments develop a more engaged workforce that is inspired and motivated towards long-term career planning and goal setting.

Challenges With Cross-Departmental Mentoring

- Communication barriers . Lingo, work attitudes and styles of communication can vary greatly between departments
- Communicating program benefits. It can be difficult to get employees to understand the importance of mentoring an employee who is not from the same department. Help employees understand and advance the entire organization's goals
- Setting common objectives. Every department has its role within the organization. It can be difficult for managers to view things from a different perspective, they may tend to see things from a more microscopic level, making it difficult for them to understand the impact their mentoring may have on employees from another division

Tips for Successful Cross-Departmental Mentoring

- Outline clear objectives for every mentor. Let them know what they should be focusing on and how their expertise can be used
- Let the mentor know if the employees are considering making a career change. They can offer perspective to help the employee make a more informed decision
- Encourage the mentee to be open to new perspectives. They can often be shut off from colleagues in other departments assuming they can't offer relevant feedback. Let them know what senior colleagues in other departments can offer. They may also be more open if their own supervisor speaks highly of the mentor
- Give employees some input on their mentoring assignments. The mentorship will not always be a perfect match. Personality differences or lack of interpersonal communication skills may mean it's best to assign a new mentor

²⁵ trainingzone.co.uk/community/blogs/annie-qureshi/cross-departmental-mentorship-does-it-really-work

CROSS-TRAINING

CROSS-COMPANY MENTORING - Formal cross-company mentoring is where a mentee is specifically matched with an outside mentor from a non-competing company. It's extremely valuable for talent development in company succession planning and cross-training when the goal is to prepare and be ready for when leadership positions open up. At the same time, it expands the capability of current leaders and retains talent. It is a tool that can be used for employees at any level because pairing to a mentor can be tailored specifically to the needs and goals of the mentee. Traditional one-on-one mentoring is the most commonly used method to provide a junior employee with guidance and perspective from a senior professional outside their own workplace.^{26 27}

Benefits

- The mentee's company benefits from having an employee who is actively growing in their career and feeding the succession pipeline
- Both mentee and mentor bring new perspectives back to their work and respective companies
- The mentor becomes gains leadership skills
- Reciprocal learning and mutually beneficial for both companies
- Mentors gain unique skills through mentorship that may not be acquired in their jobs and strengthen their interpersonal skills
- Mentors are reminded of what people at the level of the mentee are going through in their own companies. They gain perspective from the mentee's challenges
- Mentees gain an outside perspective that can be valuable to helping them within their own company
- Mentee benefits from a mentor whose experience has taken them down a similar path the mentee may be trying to navigate
- An outside mentor can help the mentee to better understand how to navigate the corporate politics
- Mentee gets hands-on learning and development with someone dedicated to their professional growth

²⁶ startribune.com - Look Outside to Develop Inside talent through Cross-company Mentoring

²⁷ askearn.org - Federal Workplace Mentoring Primer

MICRO-TRAINING ²⁸

Microtraining supports informal learning close to the workplace, thereby increasing the learning capacity of the company. The method of microlearning is being developed as a mechanism to support predominantly informal learning activities. Micro-learning is meant to be short (max 15 minute) with only one objective per course. The learning sequence follows a general path of, an active start, a demo or exercise, feedback and discussion along with a shared view on how to proceed. The sessions can be face-to-face, online, or a combination of the two.

Building and planning a microtraining strategy properly from the start, with automation in mind, will ensure that the courses can be repurposed and used across all areas of employee training; saving money, time and administrative burden. Taking time to strategize the content and goal for each learning block will future-proof it for use company-wide during orientations, onboarding training, technical and soft skills development, products and services training, workplace safety. Custom modules can be developed to cover mandatory training that may be unique to certain departments.²⁹

Benefits ^{30 31}

- High learner engagement especially through the use of micro-video content
- Better retention and limited distractions
- Fosters behavioral change with immediate application of skills on-the-job
- Breaks down complex topics into specific, actionable objectives
- More effective transfer of skills from “classroom” to “real-world”
- Accommodate short training bursts during on-the-job training
- Quicker training (courses are faster to develop and deploy)
- Location independent - supports virtual learning and remote workers
- Mobile learning. Learning can take place on any device, anywhere
- Easily repurpose micro-courses for multiple audiences
- Support custom programs for departments or job roles
- Simplify content management and enable progress tracking
- Easily index micro-courses for searchability

²⁸ [researchgate.net/publication/28264196_Microtraining_as_a_support_mechanism_for_informal_learning](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/28264196_Microtraining_as_a_support_mechanism_for_informal_learning)

²⁹ remote-learner.com/microtraining-in-a-large-organization

³⁰ elearningindustry.com/benefits-of-microlearning-case-studies

³¹ unboxedtechnology.com/microlearning-and-microtraining-techniques-for-success

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES ³²

Company Career Website

It is critical to utilize search engine optimization (SEO) to ensure the company has a job site that can be found easily through web searches. The website should enable candidates to quickly and easily set up a profile, search for jobs, and apply. It should also be attractive and representative of your company culture, set up to work inside and outside the organization, and configured to place surveys throughout the site so candidates can provide feedback on their experience. Using a chatbot to provide real-time responses and information to candidates also adds real value to your career site. Videos and infographics make the site more attractive and mobile-ready. The changing demographic of the workforce means that for many people their smartphone is their computer and may be their only method for accessing your career site and applying for jobs. Make sure to freshen up your career site periodically so returning candidates see new content and not just the same old site.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Using an ATS alongside recruitment software is an incredible tool for managing and tracking the hiring process. Candidates receive an impressive experience and therefore a great first impression of the company they may soon work for. In addition to tracking candidates, an ATS is also for end-to-end management of candidates, job postings, applications and job offers, as well as creating a searchable database of candidates, resumes and job descriptions. It helps recruiters schedule interviews, send automated emails and notifications to recruiters and candidates, and keeps recruiters and hiring managers notified about the status of each hiring process. A good ATS will be able to post jobs to external job sites and social media sites, such as LinkedIn and Twitter. This capability can improve your reach and target a wider range of candidates.

³² searchhrsoftware.techtarget.com/feature/7-talent-acquisition-strategies-for-better-hiring-in-2021

CROSS-TRAINING

Remote Hiring

Implementing and streamlining the process to attract, train and hire remote employees is crucial. Having a digital hiring process is critical for remote hiring. You must be able to have your jobs available online, interview on video conferencing software, and send, receive and sign documents digitally

Talent Sources

To optimize recruitment, it's important to identify and track where the best candidates are coming from. An ATS can measure a company's source of hire (SoH) based on records of where candidates were sourced. Analytics from recruiting websites, recruitment marketing platforms or Google Analytics can also provide data. A smart recruitment strategy tracks and regularly reviews the SoH for successful candidates who became high-performing, value-adding employees.

Skills-based Hiring

Due to AI-based technology which improves the accuracy of skills identification and matching, skills-based hiring is becoming more prevalent again. Many employers are moving away from using academic degrees as a way of measuring the skills of candidates and instead using skills-based methods.

Using skills to identify the job requirements for a position can help attract suitable candidates who may be put off by educational requirements they don't meet even though they have the skill set to do the job well. Soft skills like communication, problem solving and critical thinking are crucially important to many roles and not easily demonstrated through holding a degree.

Candidate Feedback

Despite best intentions for talent acquisition planning, there are often areas that still need improvement. The best way to understand what they are is to gather feedback from candidates about their experience throughout the process. An employee listening platform or survey tool such as *Qualtrics*, *Medallia* or *SurveyMonkey* to request feedback from candidates can work at various parts of the recruiting process. When aggregated, this feedback can point to issues that need attention to improve the candidate experience.

Marketing to College and High School Students ³³

Innovative marketing techniques are needed to reach today's students, who are tech savvy and conduct research very differently than previous generations. A company's strategy should incorporate various forms of media and technologies to promote their brand.

- Identify schools with programs that fit with the company's particular needs. Develop potential career paths and establish goals, expectations and desired results. This clarity will help find a good match and create success for both the company and the student
- Evaluate the company website. Design a content-rich section geared toward students. Use videos, podcasts and other multi-media tools to reach this younger audience using a language that speaks to them. Digital tools such as *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Snapchat* and *TikTok* should be part of the marketing campaign. Produce communication pieces that also target parents as they have become increasingly more involved in their children's career choices
- Job fairs are a great way to reach a broad cross-section of students. Many colleges and universities have general career fairs as well as specific engineering, construction and trade fairs. There is a great opportunity to establish a relationship and explore internship and co-op possibilities. Companies need to invest in video, quality graphics and multi-media tools that speak to the target age group while highlighting career advancement opportunities and other employment advantages.
- Professors, career placement offices and other faculty members can help identify high-potential students for internships or employment. They have great insight into a student's strengths, skills and goals. Research and reach out to faculty members. Professors are often looking for real world projects that can give their students practical exposure. The students they recommend could be ideal candidates for work placements within the company

³³ [constructionexec.com/article/marketing-strategies-to-improve-recruitment-efforts](https://www.constructionexec.com/article/marketing-strategies-to-improve-recruitment-efforts)

CROSS-TRAINING

Recruitment Software & Programs

Stand-Alone Applicant Tracking Systems:

- [iCIMS](#) (enterprise recruiting software)
- [SmartRecruiters](#) (talent acquisition suite)
- [Lever](#) (recruitment)
- [Greenhouse](#) (applicant tracking and recruitment software)

Human Capital Management Software (HCM):

- [Ceridian](#)
- [SAP SuccessFactors](#)
- [Workday](#)
- [Oracle Cloud HCM](#)
- [ADP](#)

Recruitment Marketing (CRM Software):

- [Beamery](#)
- [Avature](#)
- [Ideal](#)

Video Interviewing Tools:

- [HireVue](#)
- [VidCruiter](#)
- [Interviewstream](#)

Testing / Candidate Assessment Tools:

- [HackerRank](#) (developer recruitment)
- [BerkAssessment](#)
- [CriteriaCorp](#)
- [Traitify](#)
- [SHL](#)

Job Aggregators:

- Indeed, LinkedIn, Google For Jobs, ZipRecruiter