Research Examining the Return on Investment (ROI) of Manufacturing Credentials

Interview Questions for Credential Holders

- Could you give us a brief description of your job, including the most essential day-to-day tasks you do at work.
- When you were hired in your current position, did anyone ask you about your credentials? If so, what did they want to know?
- Have credentials been discussed in any of your job interviews for prior positions in the manufacturing sector, or in interviews that did not result in a job offer?
- When you first started this position, did you receive additional training from your employer? If yes, what training did you receive? Was it helpful in having a smooth integration into the job?
- Have you received any additional training after you started working here? If yes, what was that training?
- Are there aspects of your job in which you would like to receive more training? Why?
- Does your employer offer you optional training opportunities? If so, what are they?

- Tell us about each of your industry certifications or other post-high-school credentials. For each:
  - What is the credential?
    - If it is a certification: Does your certification have an examination? A recertification requirement? Can it be taken away for ethical reasons or proven incompetence?
  - What institution awarded the credential?
  - When did you obtain this credential?
  - What motivated you to pursue this credential?
  - Did you need to learn new material to obtain this credential? If so, how much of the credential covered skills and competencies that you already possessed?
  - What was the most difficult aspect of obtaining this credential?
  - Do you use what you learned from the credential in your job? All the time or infrequently?
  - Are you better at your job having earned this credential?
  - Has this credential positively or negatively impacted your career?
  - Have there been any comments or actions taken by your colleagues, supervisor, or employer that make you feel they value or do not value your credentials?
  - Would you obtain this credential again? Why or why not?
  - If the credential is a certification/license, did you renew it or do you plan to renew it?
  - Did you pay for your most recent credential training? If so, could you have requested that your employer pay for them?
  - Did you learn the new material for your credential on the job, or was it mainly on your own time?

- Are you planning to obtain more credentials in the future? If so, which ones, why, and when?
- Are there any credentials you would like to obtain, but cannot obtain due to some barrier? If so, tell us about those credentials.
- Has the employer suggested you should get a credential to enhance your current or future work?
- In general, do you feel that the investment you have made in obtaining credentials has been worthwhile?

Interview Questions for Supervisors

- How many employees working directly under you have a manufacturing-related credential? Please list the credentials you can think of.
- Do the employees who have those credentials have the knowledge, skills, and abilities that the credentials claim to validate?
- Do you encourage employees working directly under you to seek additional manufacturing-related credentials? Why or why not?
  Is there funding or other support (like schedule accommodation) offered by your organization to encourage employees to seek credentials?
- Do your employees ever approach you about seeking new credentials, or ask your opinion about credentials?
- Do you reward or recognize individuals who seek additional manufacturing-related credentials in any way, for example, in promotion, career advancement, or wages?
- Do you see evidence that employees are recognized by their peers for their credentials? If so, can you provide examples of this recognition?
- How many of your employees participate in training each year? What types of training? Is the training internal to your firm or does it involve an external provider? Is the successful completion of the training or mastery of new competencies recognized with a credential?
- To what extent do your employees use the skills and competencies associated with their credentials on the job?
- How do you evaluate worker productivity?
- Are individuals who hold credentials more productive or effective workers? Do they require less supervision?
- Are there any credentials not currently expected that may be required of your future workers?

- What knowledge, skills, and abilities are most in demand in your industry? Do adequate credentials currently exist to show that people have those skills?
- Over the last couple of years, are there any jobs at your firm that now require new knowledge, skills, and abilities? If so, do they align with any credentials already being awarded?
- (If not already addressed in the interview.) Do customers of your business ask about or expect your workers to have certain credentials? If so, which clients ask for which credentials?

Interview Questions for Hiring Managers

- How many workers have you hired over the past year?
- Walk us through the criteria you use when evaluating a job application.
- What is the most common job title you hire for in this facility?
- For this job, are there any particular training programs you think are particularly effective or valuable for potential workers?
- Which manufacturing-specific credentials, if any, do you consider when hiring?
- Do you ask about the credentials the person has acquired and listed on his/her resume?
- How many workers without a manufacturing-specific credential have you hired in recent memory? Why did you hire those employees? How have they performed on the job relative to employees in similar roles who came in with a manufacturing credential?
- Do you have any programs to encourage upskilling and the acquisition of new credentials among your current employees? Tell us about these programs.
- Do you track worker productivity? What metrics do you track? Do individuals with credentials tend to tare higher than individuals with no credentials?
- Is there a performance appraisal process? Do individuals with credentials tend to rate higher than individuals with no credentials?
- Are there any occupational licenses required for the most commonly hired positions in your facility?
    o Do you feel that these licenses should be required for this type of work?
    o If these licenses were not required, what training and credentials would you seek from your workers?
- Are there any credentials that you do not currently require but may consider requiring that workers hold or obtain in the future?
- What knowledge, skills and abilities are most in demand in your industry? Are there existing credentials that include these competencies?
- Are there any jobs with skills or competencies that are new or have changed significantly over the past five years? Do they require a credential?

- Are there any major credentials in your industry that you do not encourage your employees to obtain? Why not?
- Do you have any formal relationships with a trainer, educational institution, or an expert in the field to help up-skill or re-train your employees? If so, what is the relationship?

OMB Control #0693-0033
Expiration Date: 07/31/2022
(NIST Generic Clearance for Program Evaluation Data Collections)