



Frequently Asked Questions

M Why would I want to use the Skills Certification System (SCS)?

The Skills Certification System provides an objective tool that can be used as part of the process for employee selection or promotion. Manufacturers have found that the certifications improve the hiring process by validating skill levels, resulting in lower hiring costs and minimizing risk. Manufacturers use the SCS with current workers to validate required skill levels as part of the promotion process, to build new skills within a group of workers, and to implement production improvement strategies such as lean and value stream mapping.

M How can the Skills Certification System help me fill skilled positions in my company? Job ads result in 50 to 150 applications yet I still can't find candidates. Resumes indicate that applicants have the skills, but once they get past the first interview we find out that they don't have what we need.

Certifications help to take the guesswork out of the selection process. Once the skills required for a specific position are matched to a skill certification, an employer can list that certification as a preferred qualification for applicants. The certification validates that the individual has the skills needed for the position. Rather than relying strictly on a resume and an interview, candidates that present a certification give the employer some assurance that the person can do the job. Employers can then focus on the other traits that are important to the company and the culture. Benchmarking against high-performing current workers offers another piece of data that will help in the selection process.

M I need to hire entry level workers who can quickly become productive and also be candidates for promotion. Many new hires can perform entry level positions but struggle to learn new tasks for advancement.

The use of the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT) is an efficient and effective way to select workers who can more quickly contribute. These workers are typically also good candidates for retention and promotion. Using these certifications as a preferred qualification for job seekers results in a more qualified pool of candidates. Manufacturers have reported significant savings in training and production costs attributed to hiring a better qualified workforce.

M How do I match the certification with the job opening?

Identify the skill requirements for the position and match to the standards measured in the various certifications. Supervisors and/or lead staff in the specific area can provide input and help to confirm the match. Consider assessing some of the highest performing current workers to use as a baseline. Many education providers offer assistance in matching the skills required with a certification that will determine an individual's level. They can also administer the assessments and provide training leading to the certification.

M How do I find candidates with these certifications?

List the certification as a preferred qualification in a job posting. Also, form partnerships with local community colleges, which are a good source of certified workers. Certification sponsors can provide detailed information on local testing centers and may share information on certified workers in your area. Some manufacturers establish learning and assessment centers on-site for selection or promotion purposes.



Mi How does the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) relate to the skills required in advanced manufacturing positions? It seems so general and not related specifically to jobs in my company.

Manufacturers have found that the NCRC not only validates the candidate's basic academic knowledge, but also the ability to apply that knowledge in workplace situations. Once the NCRC level is identified, employers can look for candidates with that level. It becomes one objective criterion that will lead to a stronger candidate pool for interviews. Manufacturers using the NCRC as part of the selection process have reported millions of dollars of economic impact including reduction in OJT time, improved productivity, and increased retention.

Mi Are the SCS certifications better than our company-developed test that we have been using for the past 10 years?

A nationally recognized and validated system gives you a sense of confidence not only in the individual candidate but also in the skill level of your entire workforce. Some job requirements have changed over the years and candidates need to have different skill sets. Older tests may no longer match with required skills. The SCS certifications help to ensure that the applicant's skills match your needs.

Mi I need to identify current workers for promotion to a different department. How will the Skills Certification System help me?

The Skills Certification System provides an objective assessment of skills required for the job. A good approach is to identify the skill requirements for the positions, match them to an SCS certification, and require them as criteria for consideration for promotion. If the open positions currently exist, you can benchmark against high-performing workers currently in the position. Manufacturers using this approach have identified cost savings in improved productivity, reduced overtime, and better retention.

Mi I need to improve the skills of my current employees to prepare for production changes. How can the Skills Certification System help?

The Skills Certification System is an objective tool to assess the new skills required in the production process. Once you identify the knowledge and skill required for the new positions, you can match to the standards measured in the certifications to select the appropriate certification. Employees needing these new skills can be tested to get an objective baseline measure of their skills compared to the new skill requirements. Online or face-to-face courses or workshops can be offered at the plant or at a local community college for individuals needing to improve their knowledge and skills. After training completion, individuals can be tested to validate they have the skills and attain the certification.

Mi Are there legal issues with using the Skills Certification System for selection or promotion?

Information regarding the validity and reliability of various certifications is available from the certification sponsors. Any selection tool must be used appropriately and as designed. Specific questions should be discussed with a representative from the certification provider and your company's legal counsel.