

Getting Started

Manufacturers use industry-based certifications in several different ways to address workforce challenges. The two most common strategies are (1) assessing potential new hires as part of the selection process and (2) addressing skill development needs or promoting current workers. Use the charts below to help decide which certifications you might use to assess new hires or build the skills of current workers.

Certifications for new hires

Certifications help to take the guesswork out of the selection process. By matching the certification with the skills required for a specific position, you can validate that the job seeker has the skills to do the work. This allows you to focus on other selection criteria critical to success in the company. Employers include the certification as “preferred” or “required” in their job description.

If you want to be confident that a job applicant...

Do this...

...has **baseline academic skills** in Applied Math, Reading for Information (like a technical manual, and Locating Information (like on a spreadsheet)...



...use the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) to validate foundational skills and the ability to apply these skills in the workplace. Set the minimal level of score required by the job.

...has **core technical knowledge and skills** and can be more immediately productive on the job...



...use the Manufacturing Skills Standard Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician Certification (CPT), which covers areas such as safety, production processes, maintenance awareness, and quality assurance.

...has **specialized technical knowledge and skills** for a specific occupation...



...identify which of the 13 specialty certifications that are part of the Skills Certification System is a “match” for the job opening. Add language to the job posting that the certification is “preferred” or “required.”



AND/OR

...partner with the local community college and workforce system to design a training program aligned with industry certifications. Then you can hire new workers from that talent pool.



Certifications for current workers

Industry certifications can help manufacturers build the skills of their current workers. Several certification sponsors offer their own online training programs that can be operated in a worksite computer lab or on an employee's computer at home. Training based on the certification standards can also be delivered in partnership with a nearby community or technical college. Industry certifications can also lead to and support sound promotional practices.

If you want to be sure your current workers have the **foundational academic skills** they need to perform new, more complex skills needed for advancement or new positions...



...Use the WorkKeys Assessments associated with the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) to assess applied math and reading levels. Then use online resources or customized training to address skill gaps.

If you want to upgrade the skills of your current workforce in **core technical areas** such as safety, production processes, maintenance awareness, and quality assurance...



...Align your in-house or community college training programs with the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT).

If you want to upgrade the skills of your **machinists or metalworkers**, helping them adapt to new technologies and reduce waste...



...Align your in-house or community college training programs with National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) credentials, which include a suite of manual and CNC competencies set by and for the machining industry sector.

If you want to upgrade the **technical or specialty skills** involved in numerous high-demand occupational areas...



...Identify the specific technical certifications from the Skills Certification System that might drive change in your workplace. Purchase online training or partner with a community college for training aligned to your specific certification needs.

If you want your **engineers** to earn new credentials and validate their application of necessary knowledge and skills..



...Investigate the professional certifications offered by the Society for Manufacturing Engineers (SME).