

COMPANY CASE STUDY

Successfully Creating an Internship Program

PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY

WORKFORGE





AT A GLANCE

Natoma Manufacturing is a precision CNC contract manufacturer located in Norton, Kansas. The company manufactures build-to-order, precision machined parts from a variety of materials, maintaining ISO 9001 and AS9100 certifications and strictly adhering to those standards.

Natoma is committed to understanding, meeting, and exceeding their customer's requirements through continuous improvement of skills, capabilities, processes, and their management system. They are dedicated to delivering defect-free products relied upon by customers around the globe.

THE CHALLENGE

The direct, B2B supplier was experiencing continued challenges with recruiting skilled labor. The smaller community's talent pool was not sustainable and results from traditional recruitment efforts were declining. Since the company does not advertise sales or products, regional brand awareness was low. They needed to rely on promoting an employment brand and a creative new recruitment strategy was needed.

DISCOVERY

The company began by increasing participation in community engagement and awareness activities within the region. Staff began attending high school career fairs to promote their employment brand and show a viable alternative to college after graduation. Through these efforts they encountered students expressing interest in summer positions or internships.

AVERAGE COST-PER-HIRE BY INDUSTRY

 **\$4,300**
Banking/Financial Services

 **\$4,300**
Business Services/Consulting

 **\$3,000**
Healthcare

 **\$5,600**
Manufacturing

 **\$4,300**
Technology

INITIAL STEPS



The company started a small, summer pilot-internship program with area high school juniors. The students would start by shadowing an employee and watch the job function be done. Then they would complete a Valor Manufacturing Training skills training course that was relevant to that job.

After passing the course assessment, the students would begin work in that position. Students would spend two weeks working in a department before transitioning to the next, following the same process. Once cycled through each department, the students could choose which area they liked the most and would spend their final two weeks working in that position.



NOT JUST ABOUT MANUFACTURING

A unique aspect to this program's success was that it was not solely focused on fabricating product. The company would also step away from the production floor to take advantage of other Valor Skills Courses and work on the students' soft skills and life skills to enhance their personal development. They were enrolled in courses such as job readiness, career building, critical thinking and effective communications. This highlighted the skills the students need to know to be successful not only in school but also in their future career search and in their lives.

MEASURING SUCCESS



In post-program evaluations, the students indicated that they enjoyed the online courses before the hands on work. They pointed out that having that background, baseline knowledge before going into the job made for a much more enjoyable experience and easier transition.



The interns indicated they would like to return the next year and are interested in pursuing this field as a career. As a result, the company is now considering a part-time, after-school program to continue the success of these students. This program will be designed to help transition these part-time student employees into full-time employees, post-graduation.



Feedback from current employees was overwhelmingly positive. Staff was impressed with the interns performance and competency level due to the baseline knowledge provided by the Valor content. The training bridged the skills gap, even at an introductory level.



The average cost to recruit a general manufacturing employee is the highest among other industries at an average of \$5,611 per hire. By successfully implementing this internship program, organizations can potentially save over \$112,220 when converting and onboarding only 20 of these interns into new employees, annually.

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THE AUTHORITY ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN MANUFACTURING

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