

Jump-Start Your Apprenticeship Program

Advice for EV Companies Ready to Take the Next Step



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Meet the growing demand for skilled talent in the electric vehicle (EV) industry.

Trained talent is a pressing need for employers in the EV sector. As the industry grows, more companies are looking to set up their own apprenticeship programs to train job candidates on core skills and put them on career pathways as quickly as possible. Rivian, Panasonic, and Tesla have all established Registered Apprenticeship programs for key roles like Tool and Die Maker (Tesla), Industrial Machine/Maintenance Mechanic (Rivian and Panasonic), and Skilled Maintenance Technician (Panasonic).

Here's a roadmap for your company to get started on setting up an EV apprenticeship program.

Start by mapping key skills and competencies.

According to workforce development experts, the best apprenticeship journeys start with a clear picture of the jobs your company is seeking to fill and the skills needed to succeed in those positions. Employers should [map out the core skills and competencies](#) all apprentices will need, as well as those required for each separate position. The [Registered Apprenticeship Standards Library](#) details discrete skills required for common EV roles like those listed above: [Tool and Die Maker](#), [Industrial Machine/Maintenance Mechanic](#), and [Skilled Maintenance Technician](#).

The mapping process goes beyond technical expertise; it should also include the durable skills needed for success (e.g., communications, teamwork, etc.). Once you have a well-defined set of job descriptions, you are ready to take the next step.

Next, consider establishing strategic partnerships.

Here are some key partners you can seek out (in no particular order):

- **Other EV Companies:** When it comes to the EV sector, employers are encouraged to collaborate with other EV companies on apprenticeships. By developing these relationships early, you increase the opportunity to share lessons learned, define the scope of your apprenticeship program, and prepare for changes in the EV sector over time.
- **Local Community Colleges:** While your local community college may not have an EV apprenticeship program, there is a good chance they have a program aligned to a similar sector (e.g., manufacturing, technology, etc.). By working with the school as early in the process as possible, you can ensure that the classroom portion of your program has a home, will be run professionally, and will conform to applicable laws and regulations. EV manufacturers have established powerful partnerships with community colleges,

including Rivian with Heartland Community College (Illinois) and Panasonic with Kansas City Kansas Community College (KCKCC).

- **Workforce Boards:** The bread and butter of government-funded workforce development is the local workforce board. This group is set up to help companies find and employ the talent they need to succeed — and they have federal funding to make it happen. By reaching out to your local board as early as possible, you increase the chance that they can provide the resources and expertise you need. While they might not be connected to an EV apprenticeship today, they may be supporting similar technical positions in other industries. Explore how one Massachusetts [workforce board](#) is supporting Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Once you find the right partners for your company, it's time to tackle program design and administration.

Working with an experienced intermediary might be a good fit for your company.

The most significant obstacles to setting up an apprenticeship program often have nothing to do with job skills, training plans, or finding talent. Instead, the barriers to entry are confusion over legal and regulatory requirements; the daunting task of providing necessary administrative information; and establishing productive relationships with state and federal agencies.

There is a solution. Increasingly, intermediaries are available to help with administrative details; ensure your apprenticeships meet all government requirements; and connect you to key agencies like the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, which often have apprenticeship-ready candidates and even additional funds to support your program.

“You’re Hired” — The Apprenti Story

One established intermediary for Registered Apprenticeships is [Apprenti](#). The company’s expertise includes dealing with the U.S. Department of Labor and state workforce agencies; interacting with educational institutions; and building Registered Apprenticeships in emerging sectors. Ten years in, Apprenti’s focus remains to “build talent rather than search endlessly for it.” Ask other employers, education contacts, or workforce boards if they can recommend an established intermediary like Apprenti to support your company.