

From Challenges to Employer of Choice: The Impact of Skills Training in Buchanan County

The Problem:

Like many communities, Buchanan County, Missouri businesses faced many economic challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recruitment issues led to placement of employees in roles where they lacked sufficient training, and ultimately caused an increase in turnover.

In response, WorkForge teamed up with Buchanan County and the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce to implement a program aimed at boosting the skills of Buchanan County's workforce. Customized to fit the needs of area businesses, there were two main goals:



Cut down on staff turnover by bridging the skills gap.



Help employees level up their skill sets and career paths.

The Solution: Learning Pathways

Learning pathways provide a proven training route for employee development staff and supervisors to follow and repeat, ensuring each employee receives the development the organization requires. These pathways keep employees engaged while improving their knowledge and skill set. Learning pathways in the Buchanan County program include:

- Supervisor / Leadership
- Introduction to Computer Numerical Controls
- Advanced Computer Numerical Controls
- Pneumatics
- Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)
- Robotics
- Health & Safety
- Food Safety
- Manufacturing Logistics
- Introduction & Advanced Welding
- Fabrication, Composites & Materials
- Electrical Troubleshooting
- Six Sigma
- Blueprints & Engineering
- Automation
- Basic Manufacturing Skills



Putting ARPA Funds to Good Use

Buchanan County used allocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to offer free employee training programs for eligible area businesses. The St. Joseph Workforce Development Alliance partnered as an outreach partner to help promote and market the initiative to area organizations.

69%

Of employees under 25 who said training opportunities were a motivating factor for staying with their employer*

From Shift Worker to Supervisor

Omnium, an agricultural product manufacturer in Buchanan County, was one of the first twelve companies to adopt and implement the training program. Dillon, an Omnium employee, was working as a shift leader and looking for opportunities for professional growth.

Dillon completed the Supervisor/Leadership and Team Building tracks and quickly sought out more knowledge and opportunities to excel. Omnium's management, impressed by his newfound skills and unwavering commitment to self-improvement, swiftly promoted Dillon to Night Supervisor.

Omnium's dedication to employee growth and support extends beyond Dillon's story. Many Omnium employees have since been promoted, and the training has provided them with skills they can build on in their new positions.

After twelve months of the program, test improvement outcomes were collected from participating organizations:

Test Score Improvement	Low-End	Average	High-End
Pre-Assessment Score	21%	62%	97%
Post-Assessment Score	76%	87%	100%
Percentage Increase (% rate of change)	258%	41%	3%

REQUEST
A DEMO



LEARN
MORE



Becoming an Employer of Choice

Omnium's focus on employee growth caught the attention of county officials, naming them "Buchanan County Employer of Choice." This prestigious accolade recognizes Omnium's outstanding use of the WorkForge program and its unwavering commitment to fostering their employees' success.

97%

Course Completion Rate

“ We love it! We mainly signed up our Maintenance Department and some of our floor leads and they are getting a lot out of the training. There is a lot of good information to be learned from the training and it keeps the learner engaged.”

Melanie Cowger
Scheduling and Training Specialist, Omnium