



Career Ready Douglas

Career Ready Douglas: How to Access a New Pool of Trained Workers

Career Ready Douglas aims to offer participating businesses a new population of candidates who have participated in a condensed training program covering the basic skill needs of their industry. Targeting recent graduates planning to enter the workforce immediately, Career Ready includes industry tours, interview experiences, and a compact curriculum that teaches manufacturing industry basics such as forklift safety and operations, safety and hazard lessons, and precision manufacturing. The training also covers soft skills needed in the workplace, such as conflict resolution, workplace policy and ethics, and workplace communication. Boot camps like Career Ready are a community-based approach to creating entry-level-ready employees out of recent graduates that benefit participating companies.

Getting Started

Begin by connecting with the economic development organization in your area, as well as with the technical college, and local school CTAE departments. Some communities have an existing boot camp training program, while others could create one with the support of participating companies. Like Career Ready Douglas, most boot camps are focused on one industry and offer an expedited training process with the common skills and needs of the companies involved.

Participating companies will need to communicate their training needs and provide input on the curriculum to those putting together the schedule for the boot camp. In Douglas, it is the Vice President for Elevate Douglas, the local economic development partnership. In other communities, it may be someone from the CTAE division, one of the companies, or the technical college.

Advanced Preparation

At the beginning of the spring semester, applications are sent out to graduating seniors. The students participate in industry tours throughout the year to gain awareness of the companies in their area, the job opportunities that exist and increase student interest in the program. Applications are reviewed by the program administrator and a manageable number of students are chosen. For Douglas, this is between seven and 10 students.

Program Execution

Career Ready Douglas' program has a few phases, but the training portion takes place two weeks after high school graduation. The 10 participating employers have all agreed to and meet the following criteria:

- Must interview all participants upon completing the boot camp.
- Participate in the boot camp training through teaching a session or hosting a lunch and learn
- Must have direct hire, full-time, entry-level positions open that pay at least \$15/hour with benefits.

The curriculum is created based on input from employers. Career Ready Douglas has a comprehensive curriculum that covers everything from soft skills (HR basics, conflict resolution, workplace policy and ethics, interview skills) to technical industry training (forklift safety and operation, precision manufacturing, safety and hazards). Students will have two sessions a day, one in the morning and another in the afternoon, with a lunch session hosted by an employer, typically including a short company orientation or other lessons touching on topics such as culture or expectations.

The last day is when the 10 companies interview each participant, and job offers can be made in the following days if the company feels a student will fit one of their open positions.

Keys to success:

- Build strong relationships with the local economic development organization and the local TCSG economic development division
- Commit to providing input on curriculum and training needs
- Determine who could provide training and teach sessions during skills training sessions