Youth Apprenticeship: A Cost-Effective Talent Solution

Youth apprenticeship is an industry-driven talent strategy that meets employer needs in IT, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, business, finance, education and beyond. Why are employers investing in youth apprenticeship?

“Finding skilled new hires is expensive and time-consuming.”

“Finding skilled new hires is expensive and time-consuming.”

Companies with diverse workforces are 33% more likely to outperform less diverse competitors.

Nearly 70% of CEOs and CFOs feel they need to invest more in developing an innovative business culture.

Youth apprenticeship can deliver...

A flexible talent pipeline to meet a variety of skilled business needs.

Direct connection to young and diverse talent that delivers return-on-investment.

A culture of learning and innovation that attracts and retains committed employees.

How does it work?

• Employers select and hire apprentices, usually in their last years of high school.
• Apprentices build skills to be productive employees through training and coursework customized to employer needs.
• On the job, apprentices perform productive work from day one.
• In the classroom, apprentices work towards industry credentials, college credit, and degrees.

At the end of the program, employers can hire their apprentices as full-time employees, or apprentices may pursue further education to continue building their skills in the field.
Interns are often unpaid and tend to focus on career exploration; apprentices do real work and are paid from day one. They work and learn under the supervision of company mentors and take coursework to build toward credentials and skills defined and valued by their employer. Apprenticeships are generally longer than internships, lasting multiple years. The structured educational experience establishes a strong connection between what youth learn in the classroom and in the workplace and allows them to quickly take on greater job responsibility, contribute to their teams, and contribute to a business’s bottom line.

Employers pay apprentice wages as they would for any entry-level employee. Apprentices are usually paid a lower wage to start, which increases as they develop the skills to be fully productive. The costs of the coursework that all apprentices take to earn credentials and college credit can often be covered or subsidized by high schools, colleges, and community partners. In many communities, nonprofit intermediary organizations help employers with program start-up, apprentice recruitment, and the management of schedules, student services, and other functions critical to program success.

Yes. Federal law allows employees as young as 16, and youth apprentices are active in a wide range of occupations across the U.S. in sectors that include advanced manufacturing, IT, accounting, and healthcare. Apprentices may start work as minors, so employers should be aware of how hiring youth relates to insurance and liability policies. State agencies can provide support and advice to inform the development of appropriate youth apprenticeships, mitigate any possible liabilities, and provide clarity on any job tasks minors can and cannot do. Education partners and intermediaries may have additional information and resources to address these issues.

It’s common for youth apprentices to work 16 to 24 hours a week during the school year, then increase their workload during summers and after high school graduation. Youth apprentices typically work part time during the week and longer hours on the weekends and during the summer, but employers set schedules that meet the needs of their business while accommodating apprentices’ other educational needs.

Sources:

For more information, please visit newamerica.org/paya