

# Diversity + Inclusion Best Practices Case Study

**Talan Products, Inc:**  
ACCESS to Manufacturing Careers  
Second Chance Hiring



# About Talan Products, Inc.

Talan Products, located in Cleveland, Ohio, is an award winning full-service metal stamping company and manufacturer of engineered products. We serve over 150 customers in the fastener, building products, appliance, hardware, solar, and transportation markets.

## Program Summary

Pete Accorti, President and co-owner of Talan Products is highly engaged with Workforce Connect Manufacturing Sector Partnership, the industry sector partnership for manufacturers in the Cleveland/Cuyahoga County region. Because of this engagement, Talan Products made an early commitment to Workforce Connect's ACCESS to Manufacturing Careers program. The ACCESS to Manufacturing Careers program targets the re-entry population, individuals who recently exited the justice system. Talan has created an opportunity for returning citizens to gain access to well-paying manufacturing jobs with benefits and career advancement opportunities.

ACCESS is a collaboration between manufacturing employers like Talan, workforce, and education partners, including Towards Employment, a nonprofit workforce agency, and the Precision Metalforming Association. The Workforce Connect Manufacturing Sector Partnership designed and launched the initial ACCESS pilot program with 10 manufacturing companies, including Talan Products. Towards Employment and the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA) collaborated with the manufacturers on curriculum development and delivery. Recruiting the returning citizens for the program involves several other community organizations and nonprofits that serve the re-entry population with support and wraparound services. Prior to recruitment, the manufacturers engaged in the program worked together to establish a list of entry-level criteria, which helped support the organizations who were recruiting to find trainees who could be successful in the program. Trainees attend training for four weeks, five days a week. The trainees are paid a stipend as a part of the program.. The program is an earn and learn model. The curriculum is about 40% work readiness, 40% technical learning and 20% hands-on engagement with employers.

### Tags



IRe-entry populations;  
Second Chance Hiring

### Launch Time



3-6 months

### Location



Cleveland, Ohio  
(Cuyahoga County)

### Budget



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### Complexity



1 out of 3 light bulbs

“As an employer we need to engage with program participants early and often. We need to build a rapport with them and them with us. It helps us assess each other for a match regarding values and culture.”

– Miguel Lugo, Plant Manager.

# Program Impact

Talan engaged with the ACCESS program to support candidate pipelines. Talan engages with trainees throughout the program, participating in showcases and plant tours. ACCESS was designed as an earn and learn program to introduce the trainees to hiring employers during the program. Talan's Quality Manager is an instructor in the program, providing an opportunity for Talan staff to interact with the students. This was another key design in the ACCESS program, to have some of the instructors come directly from the participating companies. Talan has successfully matched an individual from all three cohorts of the training program to positions within the company. Talan's hires from the program have been very successful.

## Steps for Implementation

1. Educate leadership, staff, and hiring managers on the value of hiring returning citizens. The Chicago Tribune, the Urban Institute, the ACLU, the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, and the Western Michigan and Greater Baltimore areas have all touted the benefits of hiring returning citizens. To find more information on ACCESS to Manufacturing Careers <https://www.manufacturingsuccess.org/why-a-sector-partnership/access>
2. Engage with sector partnerships like [www.manufacturingsectorpartnership.org](http://www.manufacturingsectorpartnership.org) to participate in programs they are supporting.
3. Commit to interviewing and engaging in programs. Employers can provide trainers/facilitators for training programs, engage with plant tours and in-class presentations. Interview participants of workforce programming focused on returning citizens including engaging with program participants early and often.

## Best Practices

- Do not be afraid to give re-entry populations a chance. Individuals who have exited the justice system and have committed to this type of training program likely will prove themselves to be good employees. Likewise, individuals who are provided opportunities for access to good paying jobs, with benefits and advancement opportunities, have lower recidivism rates.
- Partner with agencies and organizations that are working together to meet the needs of employers. Sector partnerships like Workforce Connect in Cuyahoga County are working together with their local employers and community partners to provide workforce solutions. Getting involved in these types of efforts provides access to candidate pipelines.
- Engage with individuals in training programs early on. The earlier an employer can engage with individuals, the better they can assess each other for fit in the company, matching individual and employer values. Employers can build a rapport with the individuals and trainees can access the employers for alignment with their goals and aspirations.
- Collaborate with workforce development organizations, like Towards Employment, who can support manufacturers with best practices on hiring and retaining re-entry individuals and support individuals with additional post-placement training and coaching, so they have external support as they start their new career.

## ACCESS to Manufacturing Careers Training Program Fact Sheet

Companies with good jobs are eager to interview and hire people who graduate from this program, **including** those who have been involved in the criminal justice system and want a second chance.

ACCESS is a four-week training program that combines technical and job readiness skills.

Graduates will receive an industry-recognized certificate and will interview with companies that are hiring.

### Who should attend an info session?

Men and women who:

- like to work with their hands, be active, are open to learning new skills, motivated to work hard and grow in their job
- are ready to interview for real jobs with multiple employers
- want to earn starting wages \$13.50-\$15.00 PLUS BENEFITS
- want to prepare for beginning jobs to start a **career**
- First jobs could be machine operator, press operator, grinder, assembly, general labor
- Careers can lead to becoming a machine programmer, welder, robotics, repairing and maintaining machines

### The Class

- Four-week training
- Classes online, 9:00-3:00 4 days a week
- 1 day a week in-person hands-on learning in COVID-safe environment
- Combination of manufacturing information, technical skills, and career-readiness skills
- Attendance and assignment completion is mandatory

*Graduates say:*

*"The teachers were phenomenal, they helped me out with any problems. Thanks for the opportunity! This is a good field to be in, don't waver from it."*

*"I really appreciate that I'm learning a lot and I'm still learning."*

*"I'm having a good time, and I appreciate everyone that went on this journey with me."*

