

# Apprenticeships in Practice: An Employer's Perspective

**Workforce shortages, high turnover, and the challenge of finding skilled employees continue to impact organizations across every industry.** Our recent webinar captured the first-hand experiences of area employers who shared how Registered Apprenticeships are helping them move from reactive hiring to long-term workforce development strategies that improve retention, strengthen operations, and create sustainable talent pipelines.

## Key Takeaways from the Discussion

**The Practical Framework** - Learn how employers are combining classroom instruction, paid on-the-job training (OJT), and progressive wages into structured, benefit-eligible career pathways.

**The Retention Advantage** - Discover how clearly defined career pathways and internal advancement opportunities help organizations improve employee retention and long-term workforce stability.

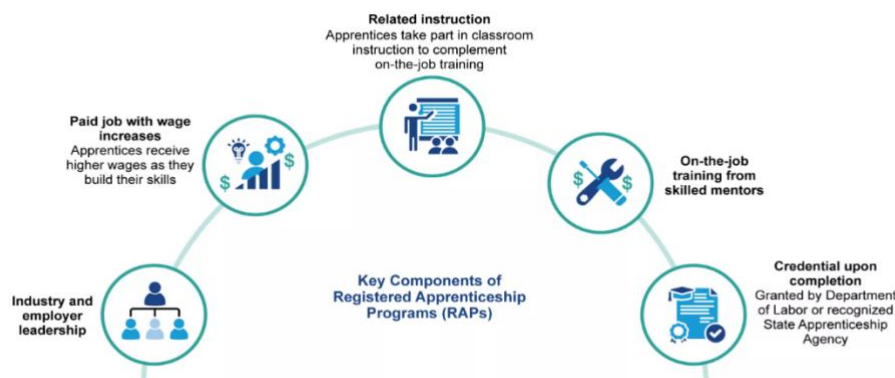
**The ROI Evidence** - See how PL Developments used Lean Six Sigma principles and workforce upskilling to reduce waste, improve efficiency, and generate significant operational savings.

**The Pipeline Shift** - Explore how Becker Complete Compactor is building future talent through strong K-12 partnerships, youth outreach, and early workforce engagement strategies.

## The Registered Apprenticeship Model

Industry-driven career path and training that builds skilled talent

Key Components of Registered Apprenticeship Programs



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Labor information; stock.adobe.com (icons). | GAO-25-107040

**Registered programs also provide employers access to state tax credits and workforce development resources.**

## Putting the Model to Work: Real-World Applications

The panelists highlighted that while the framework is structured, the impact is unique to each sector's specific pain points.

### *The Retention Advantage: Stability through Career Pathing*

A major takeaway from Latoya Washington was the shift from "just-in-time" hiring to long-term organizational stability.

- **Career Ladders:** By mapping out the next professional step for every apprentice, MUSC Health creates a sustainable workforce where employees are incentivized to grow within the organization.
- **The Outcome:** This structured approach has led to an 80% retention rate, effectively solving the high-turnover problem often found in entry-level clinical roles.



*"To solve an entry-level problem, sometimes you have to think past it—to the next level of occupation you want to grow those folks into." — Latoya Washington*

### *The Efficiency Engine: Upskilling for ROI*

Rachel Banks shared how shifting the training focus from "task-running" to "problem-solving" creates immediate operational value.

*"When our team understands the 'why' behind the 'how'... they stop just running machines and start identifying the inefficiencies that impact our profitability." —*

**Rachel Banks** (Paraphrased)



- **Embedding Continuous Improvement:** By integrating Lean Six Sigma directly into the apprenticeship curriculum, the organization moves beyond basic task-completion.
- **Operational Impact:** Apprentices are trained to identify and eliminate the "Eight Wastes" (such as defects and downtime) in real-time, shifting the burden of troubleshooting from engineering to the frontline team.

## ***The Pipeline Shift: Building Talent Early***

Both Eric Watts and Latoya Washington emphasized that **the most effective way to secure a future workforce is to shift from "finding" talent to "building" it** before it enters the general labor market.

- **Becker Complete Compactor's Strategy:** Launched a dedicated youth apprenticeship program this year to engage local schools directly, ensuring a steady stream of motivated workers into the trades.
- **MUSC's Strategy:** Integrates youth into their Patient Care Technician (PCT) program, providing high school students with fully immersive entry points into healthcare alongside adult learners.

## **Strategic Insights for Employers**

**Avoid "Perfection Paralysis":** Don't wait for a flawless plan. Start with a small pilot group, learn from the initial growing pains, and scale as the process matures.

**The Mentor Match:** Technical expertise does not always equal mentorship ability. Success relies on identifying leaders on the floor who can effectively pass on their knowledge.

**Creating a Feedback Loop:** True success occurs when the momentum of the program shifts from a management initiative to a grassroots culture that reinforces the organization's vision.



*“When you're in a culture of training... it started at the top, but then it started at the bottom and worked its way back up.” — Eric Watts*

### **Next Steps**

To transition from informal training to a Registered Apprenticeship, organizations should:

1. **Consult:** Connect with Apprenticeship Carolina to explore state tax credits and federal resources
2. **Design:** Partner with Midlands Technical College to align technical instruction with your on-the-job training needs.
3. **Launch:** Start with a pilot group to refine your mentorship and wage models before scaling.

**Watch the Full Webinar at [Corporate Resources | Midlands Technical College](#)**