

## BUSINESS SERVICES FAQ and QUICK GUIDE

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For further information contact the [business consultant or REACH Center](#) serving your area.

### **Additional information may be found at:**

TAG (Training Acceleration Grant) - [www.in.gov/dwd/2698.htm](http://www.in.gov/dwd/2698.htm)

IEDC (Indiana Economic Development Corporation) - [www.in.gov/iedc/206.htm](http://www.in.gov/iedc/206.htm)

SEF (Skills Enhancement Fund) - [www.in.gov/iedc/209.htm](http://www.in.gov/iedc/209.htm)

TECH Fund - [www.in.gov/iedc/211.htm](http://www.in.gov/iedc/211.htm)

Ivy Tech Community College - [www.ivytech.edu](http://www.ivytech.edu)

Purdue University Technical Assistance Program - [www.tap.purdue.edu](http://www.tap.purdue.edu)

### **Basic skills training**

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#### *My employees need training on blueprint reading.*

- The REACH Centers in Lafayette and Kokomo offer a computer based assessment that measures applicants' blueprint reading skill levels. The test may also be used for current employees by special arrangement. If training is needed, we can help you arrange it through IVY Tech or another appropriate training provider. If the course provides academic credits, it may be eligible for financial assistance.

#### *Our employees need to brush up on basic math skills.*

- Courses taken at Ivy Tech that qualify for credit toward an associate's degree could be covered by TAG financial assistance if the company directly or indirectly pays part of the cost of the training. To be eligible, a student is required to take at least two courses during the grant period (usually two years).

#### *It would be helpful for our employees to have classes in English/Spanish for the workplace.*

- Language classes do not generally qualify for financial assistance under the TAG program. However, they would be covered under the Skills Enhancement Fund if provided as part of a large capital investment or job addition package for the company.

### **Drug testing**

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*We are going to begin doing some work for the federal government and need to start drug screening.*

*How do we do that?*

- Drug screening is not offered through the REACH Center. However, the REACH Center can provide information about national and local agencies that will perform this screening for your company under a separate agreement.

## Entry level screening

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*Our biggest problem is finding job applicants who will show up on time every day and will work well in a team.*

- The REACH Center offers a video-based assessment of workplace readiness skills which includes such topics as responsibility and interaction with team members. The score on this indicator has been nationally validated as a reliable indicator of these “soft” skills. This assessment is available by special arrangement at no cost as part of a pilot program. Contact the REACH Center to find out if you are eligible.

*We are having trouble finding entry level workers who have the skills needed to work in an advanced manufacturing environment.*

- Assessments in over 50 specific skills needed in a modern manufacturing environment are offered through the REACH Center to help identify applicants with the needed skills. In addition, companies may request evaluation of specific jobs for the level of skills required. Applicants can then be screened for those skill levels through the WorkKeys program. Contact the REACH Center to find out if your company is eligible for these services free of charge.

*What we need is workers who can understand the many aspects of their equipment and how their job fits in the overall process in our plant.*

- The MSSC certification program offered at Ivy Tech Community College offers training in safety, quality practices and continuous improvement, manufacturing processes and production, and maintenance awareness. This training is offered to employees but is also available to students and others seeking employment. Currently, this training is provided through a special regional program at no cost.

## Lean and quality training

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*There is a workshop next month for our employees on “principles of lean manufacturing” - can you help us pay to send them?*

- Workshops do not generally result in a nationally recognized credential, which is the requirement to be eligible for funding through the TAG program. In addition, there is at least a 60-day lead-time on the approval process for a TAG grant.

*Our customer wants our company to obtain an ISO certification. Will the related training qualify for financial assistance?*

- ISO certification pertains to the plant, not the employees, but in some cases employees may receive a nationally recognized credential in the process. The Purdue Technical Assistance Program issues such credentials, which have qualified for financial assistance under the TAG program.

*We really need some financial help in getting Six Sigma Black Belt training for some of our employees.*

- Training for an employee to become a certified "black belt" in Six Sigma is a major commitment of time and money. However, this approach is required of many suppliers by major manufacturers and resulted in substantial savings to participants. A black belt (or a green belt) in Six Sigma is a nationally recognized certification and would be eligible for financial assistance under the TAG program. Funds are limited to \$3500 per employee per year. The Purdue Technical Assistance Program and Ivy Tech offer this training; it is also offered on line by various providers.

## Mature workers

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*How can I find out the shape of my workforce and where we'll be in the next 5-10 years?*

- Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc. can conduct a Mature Worker Impact Analysis to help you understand the logics of an aging workforce and what that may do to your bottom line.

*Where can I find out about training opportunities for a specific occupation?*

- Two websites exist that will help with searching of training opportunities available in North Central Indiana. [www.maturity matters.org](http://www.maturity matters.org) and [www.maturity matters.org/LLL/index.cfm](http://www.maturity matters.org/LLL/index.cfm)

*How can I get more information for my Human Resource department or individuals on how to manage the changing demographics of my workforce?*

- Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc. has available Mature Workforce Management Workshops for managers and human resource staff. Also available are Transition Seminars at you worksite for employees eligible or considering retirement. Call 1-866-510-7732 Kathy Burns Ext. 311 or Susie Perkins Ext. 312 for more information.

## **New equipment training**

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*Our company is ordering new equipment, and we will need to train our workers on it.*

- A capital investment in equipment may make a company eligible for training assistance through the Skills Enhancement Fund of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. Training on new equipment resulting in a journeyman upgrade or other credential may also be eligible for TAG training assistance.

*A new facility is planning to open and they want to train local workers prior to opening*

- Training funds can be used by a company in advance of opening a new facility (or any other company) if the company is willing to commit to hiring unemployed or underemployed workers who successfully complete the training and meet the other normal hiring requirements of the company. There are many screening tools available to help with the initial hiring process prior to training either before or after the facility opens.

## **On the job training**

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*The skills I need are unique to this company so most of our training is on the job - can you help with that?*

- On the job training is not eligible for financial assistance under the TAG program unless it is part of a recognized apprentice or journeyman training program. However, it could be covered by the Skills Enhancement Fund of the Indiana Economic Development Commission if it is part of a company expansion.

## **Post secondary education or certification**

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*Some of our employees want to take courses at Ivy Tech that will benefit our company as well - can you help us pay for that?*

- Courses taken at Ivy Tech Community College that would qualify for credit towards an associate's degree or a Career Development Certificate could be covered by TAG financial assistance if the company directly or indirectly pays part of the cost of the training. To be eligible a student would have to take at least two courses during the grant period (usually two years).

*Is there any financial help available for one of our employees who wants to finish a BA degree?*

- Tuition for courses to fulfill a degree beyond an associate's degree is not eligible for reimbursement from the TAG program unless it is for a degree in nursing or other direct patient care field.

*If our lab technicians were certified then some of the work we now send out could be done in house. The certification is a lengthy and expensive process. Is that covered?*

- Certifications can be covered by the TAG program but they need to be completed in the two-year period of the TAG grant. The grant may pay up to \$7000 per employee over that period

and can cover more than that dollar amount for an expensive certification if there are others in the grant that cost less.

## **Skills verification**

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*How can I be sure applicants have the skills they claim to have on their resume without interviewing each one?*

- The REACH Centers are now offering at no cost a set of screening tools to verify skills by verifying past employment, administering Work Keys assessments for jobs that have been profiled, and/or testing applicants on your choice of more than 900 tests of specific skills. This is a pilot program funded by the US Department of Labor so you should contact the REACH Center to check for eligibility.

## **Software training**

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*My office workers need to upgrade their skills on Microsoft Word and Excel.*

- Training modules for basic Microsoft Office products are now available through the local WorkOne office at no cost. This training is intended for applicants who do not meet specific employer applicant requirements for these software programs. However, it can also be used for current workers by special arrangement. Other providers' workshops and short courses limited in scope and not resulting in a nationally recognized certification are not eligible for financial assistance.

*I want to train someone internally as a software administrator instead of contracting the service.*

- The cost of training for Microsoft and other nationally recognized certifications for software administration may be partially covered by a TAG grant. The TECH Fund of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation also covers this type of training. The dollar limits and match requirements are somewhat different for each program.

## **Supervisor training**

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*We have recently promoted some production workers to supervisory positions, and they will need some additional training.*

- Ivy Tech and the Purdue School of Technology both offer programs leading to certifications in supervision. This training would be eligible for financial assistance under the TAG program. Training for management and executive level staff is not eligible for reimbursement except for smaller companies (under 100 employees).

*How can I get more information for my Human Resource department or individuals on how to manage the changing demographics of my workforce?*

- Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc. has available Mature Workforce Management Workshops. Also available are Transition Seminars. Call 1-866-510-7732 Kathy Burns Ext. 311 or Susie Perkins Ext. 312 for more information.

## **White collar workers**

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*Where can I find white collar professionals for some openings that I have?*

- A fellowship dedicated to assisting white collar professionals re-enter the labor market has been established for the region. The Business & Professional Exchange (BPE) provides business and professional staff and middle- and upper-level managers with a forum to develop re-employment strategies and to network with employers and one another on a weekly basis.