

Train the Trainer, A Complement to All Skills Initiatives

By Alexandra Hoffmann, GACC

With all of the news highlighting apprenticeship efforts in New Jersey, the GACC has committed to supporting the success of the community of partners that is emerging. In addition to hosting its own USDOL Registered apprenticeship program, showcasing the German dual-education system in the state, the Chamber is offering elements from that program to the wider network to enable consistent quality of training and outcomes for apprentices from all industries and regions.

As we have engaged with the various host companies, sponsors and educators, a consistent need has emerged for skilled trainers. The USDOL requires that apprenticeship host companies formalize their training plans, but it's up to the company to structure the actual training. Some larger companies turn to their in-house training departments to align the apprenticeship to their existing programs. Others turn to standardized programs for their industries. Some might send a trainer to a leadership seminar. And others might simply assign the role of trainer without any guidance.

In Germany, a critical part of the apprenticeship system that the German Chambers of Commerce (IHKs) administer throughout the country is standardized trainer qualifications. All apprenticeship host companies are required to send their trainers through the IHK Train the Trainer program. This program provides the companies' skilled workers with the tools they need to be successful as trainers and teaches them to hold themselves accountable for their apprentices' success.

This July the GACC held its first one-week Train the Trainer seminar in New Jersey in partnership with the Employers Association of New Jersey (EANJ). The 14 skilled professionals, who took part in the course came from a wide range of industries, and returned to their jobs with new tools, motivation and credentials to succeed as Trainers.

Robert Bock Jr. joined from Our House, Inc., an organization that supports meaningful lives for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. As a trainer, Robert stressed: "The skills I learned in Train the Trainer have been very beneficial to both my company and for my own professional development as a trainer. I use the skills I learned from the course to teach staff more effectively. which in turn helps staff support our clients more effectively. "

The NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) shares the GACC's passion for training Trainers to make apprentices successful. In their most recent grant offering for apprenticeship, LWD confirmed host companies and sponsor would be able to utilize state funding for Trainer Training. The GACC applauds this important step and is ready to support the needs to the New Jersey community.

Our next Train the Trainer seminar will take place this November, and we will be opening multiple new sessions in 2020. To learn more about the upcoming seminars, visit our website or contact us at apprenticeship@gaccny.com.