



# BEST PRACTICES REFERENCE GUIDE

**TIPS AND TOOLS TO RETAIN AND GROW YOUR WORKFORCE**

[nmma.org/workforce](http://nmma.org/workforce)

# BUILDING AND SUSTAINING A TALENT PIPELINE

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How will the skilled employees of tomorrow be discovered, recruited and retained?

Many industries today, including the recreational boating industry, are facing a critical shortfall of qualified workers. In the marine industry specifically, the demand for skilled labor spans from manufacturing to service and repair, crossing the entire value chain.

Attracting qualified workers, prioritizing technical, vocational and apprenticeship programs and connecting marine industry stakeholders with programs and opportunities are key to building a workforce that can meet the demands for production and service the industry needs to keep boaters on the water. From outboard engine mechanics to yacht captains; skilled factory laborers to engineers; sales professionals and operations managers, creating and sustaining a talent pipeline has become a priority for marine businesses.

As you evaluate your strategy, it's important to remember there is no one-size-fits-all solution to this issue. NMMA developed this Best Practices Reference Guide to help you navigate proven hiring and retention practices used within our industry. Ultimately, the creation of a sustainable workforce for your business will require a steady commitment to ensure your company's needs are met.

Visit [www.nmma.org/workforce](http://www.nmma.org/workforce) to learn about of marine specific training, programs, resources, career days and more. Read on for proven member examples.



## WHAT

Work Release Program with the WI Department of Corrections

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## WHY

We were struggling to find skilled, qualified, reliable workers. This program helps inmates reintegrate back into society, while offering us workers who show up every day and who want to be at work. Once eligible to be released, many of these individuals have the opportunity to remain in our employment. Over 2 years, more than 2 dozen employees have connected to us via this program.

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## HOW

This program identifies inmates who are currently serving a sentence at a local minimum-security facility and allows them to work for local companies. Each applicant is thoroughly screened by the Dept. of Corrections to ensure safety for all employees and for community members.



**SAFE HARBOR**  
MARINAS

## WHAT

### Apprenticeship Program

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## WHY

To recruit qualified technicians for our service yards, general managers and corporate team members to support our marina operations. Our workforce development team is focused on developing programs that impact recruitment and retention. With programs in place that invest in our team members, we will find it easier to recruit and retain talent.

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## HOW

We are piloting an apprenticeship program that will enable us to grow talent from within. In addition, we are bringing recruiting specialists in house to help find more seasoned talent. This program is just one component of our company-wide initiative to create training opportunities for our team that can help each SHM employee advance their skill set and their career.

## WHAT

### NMMA Career Days

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WAVERUNNERS® AND BOATS

## WHY

Our dealers have expressed concerns with finding and retaining qualified service technicians. These career day events offer a platform for us to connect with students, educational and industry organizations, to create awareness of Yamaha Marine University. To date, we have connected with almost 600 new contacts.

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## HOW

We actively participate in as many career days as possible to create awareness of job opportunities in our industry. Our representatives discuss technical careers with attendees to ultimately connect them with a Yamaha Marine dealer.

## WHAT

Regal Technical University

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## WHY

To provide specific training to potential new hires, entitled “Professional Boatbuilder”, designed to prepare them for a career path at Regal. As new employees enter our workforce trained in basic skills, onboarding and productivity in house at Regal are maximized from day one.

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## HOW

Our relationship with Valencia Community College began as a method to train new workers before they join our payroll, with a focus on assembly and soft skills. Ideally, we’ll need to have an industry certification in place to ensure funding and higher pay for starting jobs, a goal that we are working towards.

## WHAT

IMPACT (Improving my Personality & Character Traits) MINISTRIES, a faith-based mentoring program.

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## WHY

To not only make a positive impact on the community but to also offer management a way to take action to address head on the void of male role-models in the community by connecting them to the positive benefits of steady employment.

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## HOW

With the goal of making a difference in the lives of others, a 13-week job-rotation program is offered to select candidates from the community, connecting them to full time employment. Apprentices are selected via a formalized interview process with our IMPACT coaches (employees committed to mentoring others). Weekly feedback is offered to each apprentice who is awarded full-time employment upon successful graduation from the program.



GROUP	WHY TARGET THIS GROUP?	HOW TO CONNECT WITH THEM?	WHAT CAN YOUR COMPANY DO?	PARTNERSHIPS
Existing Employee	<p>They already understand your company's culture and work ethic.</p> <p>Up-skilling and/or cross training increases employee retention and productivity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create apprenticeships and certifications, conference workshops, seminars <i>*see SHM proven example</i></li> <li>Train the trainer and offer group training and continuing education</li> <li>Promote seminars, training and other career advancement opportunities on internal channels (i.e. Slack, intranet, message board)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide on-the-job training</li> <li>Create talent cultivation plans</li> <li>Budget for ongoing training</li> <li>Attend professional development</li> <li>Demonstrate employee investment, implement policies and procedures designed to retain older workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with local marine trade associations and chambers of commerce</li> <li>Community colleges/post-secondary training providers</li> <li>National associations (NMMA, MRAA, ABYC, AMI, etc.)</li> <li>Product manufacturers or distributors</li> <li>Workforce investment boards, regional economic development organizations, Dept. of Labor, National Association of Manufacturers</li> </ul>

Entry Level Worker	<p>This pool of potential candidates is ready to work and can be trained on the job with affordable starting wages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a pre-apprenticeship or other short-term training that provides exposure to the industry</li> <li>Offer on-the-job training</li> <li>Create videos which will offer a behind-the-scenes look emphasizing starting pay, staff development programs, benefits of living (or relocating) in your community</li> <li>Nurture a positive work environment with competitive wages and a solid onboarding experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a healthy onboarding process</li> <li>Create an internal career pathway model</li> <li>Provide on-site mentorship model</li> <li>Provide input and feedback to trainers</li> <li>Host a Manufacturing Day program</li> <li>Build a pipeline between military community and manufacturing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career and youth centers</li> <li>School and training providers, including ABYC Marine League of Schools</li> <li>State and local economic development or workforce agencies</li> <li>State agencies (corrections, veterans) <i>*See Marquis' proven example</i></li> <li>Local organizations focused on placing adults (GED/adult education programs, community action, religious institutions) <i>*See Regulator's proven example</i></li> <li>US Department of Labor</li> <li>State and federal legislators</li> </ul>
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Trade/Technical School Graduate	<p>Graduates have made the decision to focus on marine industry training and will graduate as semi-skilled to skilled workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in career days, host industry tours, have an expert in your organization conduct an in-class workshop. <i>*See Yamaha's proven example</i></li> <li>Volunteer to be a guest instructor in class or offer teacher externships</li> <li>Underwrite a scholarship</li> <li>Establish a social media content campaign emphasizing starting pay, staff development programs, the benefits of living (or relocating) in your community and offer insight into what day-to-day schedule looks like</li> <li>Use video dominant platforms to recruit, such as YouTube</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide input and feedback for demand-driven programming <i>*See Regal's proven example</i></li> <li>Hire graduates</li> <li>Mentor students</li> <li>Offer paid internships, summer and/or P/T employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program instructors and directors</li> <li>Career counselors and job placement offices</li> <li>Product distributors or manufacturers</li> </ul>
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*Reference credit:*

**10 + 1 Strategy: A Marine Industry Guide to Growing the Workforce**

Released jointly by the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas, the National Marine Manufacturers Association and the Rhode Island Marine Trade Association, this comprehensive study provides actionable solutions with specific tactics that employers can begin using today and was a key source of “best practices” for this reference guide.

Thank you to the executive staff of the Rhode Island Marine Trade Association for authoring this comprehensive guide and for authorizing us to replicate key content here.