

Sarasota County Manufacturing Plan of Action

An Innovative Workforce System that will Connect Today and Tomorrow's Workers to Jobs in an Evolving Economy through a Community Approach



CareerEdge
Funders Collaborative

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**GULF COAST
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Purpose of this Plan of Action

The purpose of this *Plan of Action* is to put more Sarasota and Manatee county residents to work, while filling vacant positions within the manufacturing sector and closing the skill gaps that are limiting growth for the industry.

Through the *CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study*, employers reported that if they were able to fill jobs with skilled workers, they would have the means to grow their operations. Our objective is to work together to connect the dots in four areas 1) improving **awareness** of employer needs and the training opportunities available for workers, 2) improving **educational programs** – both K-12 and post-secondary – to meet the training needs of employers and workers 3) expanding **business and community partnerships** for a more dynamic and efficient workforce system, and 4) **engaging employers**, as key partners in the success of the new initiatives under this Plan.

As a community we will pull together to implement this Plan of Action to accelerate job creation, increase employment and advancement for workers, and help manufacturers grow their revenue and production. In the process, the Plan will foster greater economic stability and growth for Sarasota County.

This is a conceptual proposal developed in conversation between the Sarasota County Administrator, Sarasota County School Superintendent, Sarasota Memorial Hospital and CareerEdge Funders Collaborative, in response to a directive by the Sarasota County Commissioners during a joint meeting with the County School Board in August of 2012. The Sarasota County Administrator appointed an Advisory Taskforce to spur and encourage next steps. The Taskforce developed a work plan that will address the needs of employers and residents in Sarasota County. The details of this plan are summarized throughout this proposal.

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Bridging the Gap

To resolve workforce issues including but not specific to awareness, training and employment in manufacturing

a combined community effort between businesses, educational partners including: K-12, technical schools, community colleges and universities, economic development corporations, public/private partnerships and funders must become united by a single vision, mission and objective.

The tasked objective for this community-wide plan is to bridge the skill gaps limiting unemployed, entry-level workers and students from progressing into higher paying careers and to correct the misalignment of resources between educational partners, community agencies, employers and other public/private partners to meet employers' needs.

Commitments from the Community

Commitments from the following organizations have already been dedicated so the Plan of Action within this proposal can be addressed and the mission achieved.

Atlantic Mold and Machining Corporation
CareerEdge Funders Collaborative
Economic Development City of North Port
Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County
Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Inc.
Sarasota County Government
Sarasota County School Board
Sarasota County Technical Institute
Sarasota & Manatee Manufacturers Association
State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota
Suncoast Workforce
The Greater Sarasota County Chamber of Commerce



Executive Summary

A great deal of attention is being paid to workforce development at the national and state levels. As new funding priorities take shape that could lead to consolidation or funding cuts, new structures and a greater or lesser degree of accountability for workforce agencies, community-wide approaches and collaboration are more important than ever before.

Sarasota County is tasked with creating economic opportunities, filling skill gaps and addressing the needs of residents and businesses. This Plan of Action calls for educators, workforce and economic development agencies, and public/private partnerships to work together, to pool resources, streamline communication and operate as a dynamic and cohesive workforce community.

This *Plan* outlines key strategies that will put Sarasota and surrounding counties on the map as

a place where the most talented workers reside and companies have the support needed to thrive.

A major regional issue for employers and residents alike is the persistent skills gaps. Many employers in Sarasota and Manatee counties are willing and able to hire more workers, but unable to find workers with the skills they need. The *CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study* reported that not only are manufacturers hiring, but their number of available positions is growing. More than 50% of the region's manufacturers had more full-time openings in 2012 than in 2011.

This paper details a *Plan of Action* that unites the community to address the skill gaps and workforce issues brought to light from over 100 regional manufacturing companies through the CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study. The Plan outlines both long and short term goals.

Our community-wide Plan of Action is ***Phase One*** of a three phase strategic approach.

Phase One

- Define the scope of work
- Outline a strategic plan for resolution
- Name taskforces/organizations that will work together to address actionable items

Phase Two

- Separate the Plan into micro-plans so each part can be drilled down to specific actionable steps
- Assign organizations to each step within the micro-plans to achieve the goals of the Plan
- Create a manageable and specific timeline for outlined actions and tasks

Phase Three

- Execute micro-plans
- Establish a matrix for reporting on achieved outcomes for each area in the Plan of Action
- Assign a leader to strategically steer each of the four targeted areas toward the desired outcomes

CareerEdge Funders Collaborative Manufacturing Skill Gap Study

In order to better understand and quantify the skills gaps faced by manufacturers in Sarasota and Manatee counties, *CareerEdge* commissioned a skill gap study by a third-party researcher, *Kempton Research and Planning*.

The *Study* consisted of two-phases of research. Phase One was qualitative-in-depth interviews with executive leader of area manufacturing companies, community partners and educators. Phase Two used a mixed methodology with online/telephone surveys with manufacturers

only. The Study was completed in July of 2012. Of the 125 employers who participated 70% had been in operation more than 10 years and 44% have between 11 and 99 employees.

The data yielded from this Study provided the platform for this work. The Study cited community-wide concern over misalignment between educational partners, employers, community agencies and residents of this region. Many residents are either unaware of available opportunities or have not been educated in what career pathways are available in manufacturing.

Study Results

UNFILLED JOBS

65% of employer respondents indicated they had between 1-10 jobs currently available

45% Indicated 1-3 jobs have gone unfilled for 3 months or more

11% Indicated 4-10 jobs have gone unfilled for 3 months or more

TYPES OF UNFILLED JOBS

41% Indicated skilled production as the number one unfilled position

17% Indicated engineering technologists was the second unfilled position

SKILLED PRODUCTION

56% of manufacturers indicate they need skilled production workers

38% Stated over the next 3-5 years hiring for skilled production positions would be a top challenge

SKILL GAPS

71% of employers believe there is a skills gap in the region

69% Believe this has gone on longer than three years

Top Reasons for Skill Gaps to be Addressed in this Plan of Action

Number 1 Reason for the Skill Gaps, according to Employers

➔ Local students are not choosing manufacturing jobs as a career

- 77% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed to this statement

Number 2 Reasons for the Skill Gaps, according to Employers

➔ High technology or production skilled workers are not available

➔ Local schools are not preparing workers with skills needed in manufacturing

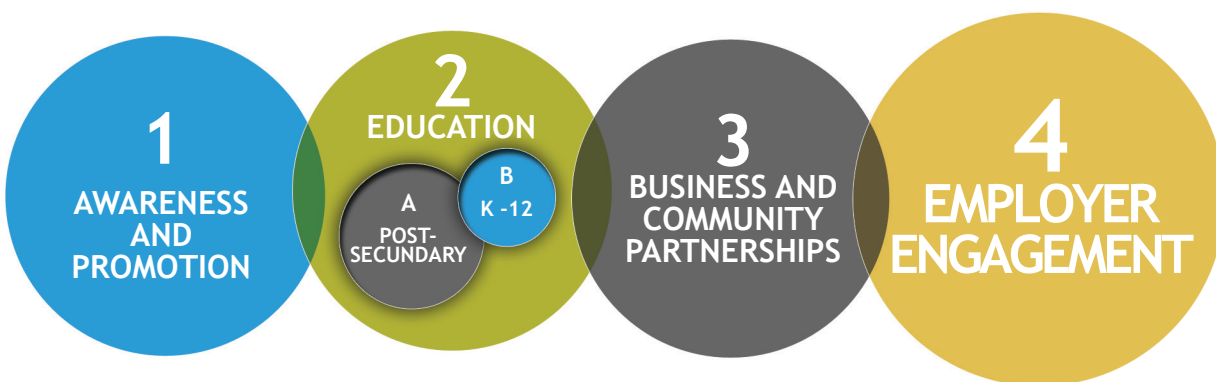
- 75% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed to this statement

Additionally, 54% of respondents believe community partners should be more involved in identifying skill needs and developing programs, providing needed training, contributing funding and incentives and focusing students on manufacturing careers.

These issues were brought to the surface as a result of the Study. Sarasota County Government assigned this Advisory Taskforce to create a plan of action that would lead to the resolution of the stated concerns.

Four Components of the Plan of Action

Taking the results of the CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study into consideration there seemed to be four major components to which all actions would be addressed. Within the context of these components action items that identify roles for various strategic partners were assigned. From there, specific strategies were identified that will form the basis of the micro-plans to be executed by the identified partners. The Plan of Action focuses on the following key components:





Plan of Action Summary

Workforce development is defined and viewed as a multidisciplinary public-private enterprise whereby education, workforce development, economic development and funders link together to form a coherent strategy. The strategies defined within this summary engage all community disciplines whose work affects education, economic development and training for our community.

To successfully develop our workforce and close skill gaps will require community-wide effort between future job seekers, employers, economic development corporations, educators, community organizations, private/public/philanthropic partnerships and funders.

This collaboration nurtures and develops the intellectual capacity and employment-related talents and skills within our emerging workforce. The workforce requires assisting young and adult students, as well as unemployed, underemployed and employed workers who are seeking a career change. A broad-based community effort to identify future and current career pathways, assess career interests and provide incremental training is needed to employ citizens of our community. Once accomplished, this Plan of Action will develop appropriate levels of opportunities to receive hands-on experience in the workplace within related career fields and provide commitments for citizens to viable careers with local employers.

Next Steps

Following the execution of the Phase One Plan detailed in the tables at the end of this document, the community-wide plan will enter Phase Two.

PHASE TWO

- Separate the *Plan of Action* into micro-plans so each segment and line item included can be drilled down to specific actionable and achievable steps
- Assign organizations to items within the micro-plans so work can be designated and associated with each step that will lead to the achievement of the goals included in the *Plan of Action*
- Create a manageable and specific timeline for outlined actions and tasks to be accomplished by each party



There are seven key strategies embedded within the Plan of Action

Key Strategies in this Plan of Action

Manufacturing Workforce Partnership

- The *Manufacturing Workforce Partnership* is an employer-led collaboration among SAMA, Educators, Employers, Industry Experts, and Community Organizations. Its membership and participation will be fluid to address specific or immediate needs as identified, to accommodate the many local manufacturers that do not have adequate staffing to participate regularly.
- CareerEdge will serve as the intermediary for the *Manufacturing Workforce Partnership* to invest funding over the next 24 months to address the critical skill gaps and workforce challenges employers in this industry face.
- The purpose of the Partnership is to identify, assess, measure, and monitor progress toward closing the skill gaps currently challenging our manufacturing community.

Advisory Groups

- The SAMA network and other regional employers will convene to speak at or participate in School Board, County Commission or other meetings to promote and update on the progress of employers' commitment to the goals outlined in this Plan as well as the status of their workforce needs.
- SAMA and other regional employers will serve on Advisory Groups to support and enhance secondary and postsecondary programs leading to manufacturing careers. The groups will review programs, support curriculum development, and engage employers with students and teachers.
- Advisory Groups will report progress to the *Manufacturing Workforce Partnership*.
- *Manatee Sarasota Workforce Council* consists of organizations whose goals are to strengthen, sustain and grow the region's workforce and economy. This includes Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Corporations, Suncoast Workforce, educational partners, Sarasota-Manatee Human Resources Association, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation and CareerEdge


Funders Collaborative. Through this network's pooled resources, all aspects of the community will work together to ensure alignment of funding, resources and communication for the manufacturing industry.

Employer Engagement

- Employers will provide externship and job shadowing for teachers, as well as facility open houses and tours for students, parents, educators and training cohorts to give them first-hand knowledge and exposure to the work culture of a manufacturing facility.
- Employers will work through educational partners to invite students enrolled in technical programs, or those seeking to enroll, to attend open houses and facility tours to help increase post-training job placement rates.
- Employers will commit to priority hiring for graduates of quality training programs. This will diminish skill gaps for companies who will also have initial input into curriculum development.

Employment Resource Center(s)

- Suncoast Workforce will provide employers with responsive and scalable recruitment solutions to include candidate sourcing, assessment and screening, and mass recruitment and hiring events to fill in-demand positions. Career seekers in Sarasota County will receive work readiness workshops and employment services.
- Individuals in Sarasota County will need to be recruited to attend training and fill in-demand jobs. Suncoast Workforce will lead this recruitment through the services offered at their One-Stop Resource Center(s).
- Community resources such as Goodwill Job Connection, Salvation Army, State College of Florida, and other local job placement services will also be utilized.
- SCTI will make program visits and marketing materials available to prospective employees and training participants.



continued....

Social Media & Advertising

- The community will have access to a portal of information regarding manufacturing career pathways through www.suncoastcareers.com, including details on skill requirements, training and educational partners, to serve as a guide for those seeking a career change, employment or training in the manufacturing sector.
- Employers will take advantage of social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter to advertise positions available and recruit employees.
- *Manatee Sarasota Workforce Council* will utilize partner websites to connect stakeholders to foster relationships for various committees and project efforts.
- Community Outreach efforts focused on local agencies and non-profit organizations will be targeted for advertising.

Local Media

- Through collaboration with local media, including *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, *Biz941*, *SUN Newspaper*, *ABC7*, *SNN*, *Access 19*, and others, we will cast a wider net of exposure in the community to transform the outdated perception of work in modern manufacturing. By utilizing local media we can capture specific success stories as we gain ground in placing individuals into training and then careers.

Career Academies

- Provide job shadowing/internships for teachers so they better understand the manufacturing industry and are able to bring real-world experience into the classroom.
- Enhance technical training within career academies to align with employer needs.
- Develop and improve articulation agreements between secondary and postsecondary educational providers.
- Utilize *Dream It, Do It!* National Association of Manufacturers campaign to improve the image of manufacturing careers.

- Engage employers in Adopt-a-High School program to provide specific supports such as guest speaking, open houses of manufacturing facilities, and other efforts to educate youth about careers in the industry.
- Identify and implement career advisory services for career academy students.
- Make SCTI visits and marketing materials available to career academy students.

Curriculum Development

- The *CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study* found that, although employers manufacture diverse products with many different job titles, there is a core skill set that boils down to only a handful of positions in which similar training could be facilitated to address the skills needed by a multitude of companies.
- To ensure that schools are accurately preparing students for the careers available today, employers must be a part of the curriculum development process, which aligns state mandated standards with practical application. Through the *Manufacturing Workforce Partnership* employers will convene on a six- to eight-week basis where core skill sets can be narrowed even further and translated into core curriculum shared with educators.
- Employers will work with education partners to develop “Just In Time” training options to meet their immediate needs.

OJT Funding & Internship Placement

- On-the-Job Training (OJT) funding will be utilized to invest in potential employees. The employer will receive reimbursement for wages while workers receive OJT for specialized skills to enter their new careers.
- Individuals coming out of high school and technical programs will participate in internships and/or OJT to gain experience specific to skilled production.
- Through the *Manufacturing Workforce Partnership*, employers will commit to hiring employees who complete OJT and internships.

Action Items		Timeframes	Strategies		Career Edge	Suncoast Workforce	EDC	Manuf. Employers	Educ. Partners	Business & Trade Assocs	Non Profits	Comm Partners
Awareness & Promotion												
AWARENESS & PROMOTION: A Critical Need to Market Careers in Manufacturing – In the CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study over 100 regional employers stated a huge concern was a lack of awareness both in the opportunities that are available in manufacturing and the perception of what it’s like to work in manufacturing. Creating awareness from all sides of the community will be an action embedded throughout the efforts of this project.												
<div>1</div> <div>Target Unemployed & Underemployed workers</div> to develop an understanding about in-demand careers with high-wages and advancement opportunities.	SHORT/LONG	<div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Career Resource Centers</div> <div><div></div>Social Media & Advertising</div> <div><div></div>Local Media</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>						
	LONG	<div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Social Media & Advertising</div> <div><div></div>Career Academies</div>		<div>X</div>		<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	SAMA				
	SHORT	<div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Social Media & Advertising</div> <div><div></div>Local Media</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>		<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	SAMA				
	SHORT	<div><div></div>Advisory Groups for both secondary and postsecondary</div> <div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Curriculum Development</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>		<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>					
	LONG	<div><div></div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div></div>Advisory Groups</div> <div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Social Media & Advertising</div> <div><div></div>Local Media</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>	SAMA SHRA				
Post-Secondary Education												
POST SECONDARY EDUCATION: Preparing Employees for Middle Skills Jobs in Manufacturing – Employers reported in the CareerEdge Manufacturing Skill Gap Study that they need help filling positions with skilled workers. There is a critical demand and shortage of skilled workers for in-demand opportunities in manufacturing. Below is a plan of action that will translate into resolving the skill gaps and shortage of skilled workers needed for jobs in the local manufacturing sector.												
<div>6</div> <div>Target Unemployed and Underemployed workers</div> for enrollment in postsecondary programs leading to certification and skills training aligned to employer needs	SHORT/LONG	<div><div></div>Employment Resource Center(s)</div> <div><div></div>Social Media & Advertising</div>		<div>X</div>			<div>X</div>	Chambers	<div>X</div>	<div>X</div>		
	SHORT/LONG	<div><div></div>Career Academies</div> <div><div></div>OJT & Internship Placement</div>					<div>X</div>		<div>X</div> SCTI			
	SHORT/LONG	<div><div></div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div></div>Advisory Groups</div> <div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Curriculum Development</div> <div><div></div>OJT & Internship Placement</div>	<div>X</div>				<div>X</div>	SAMA	<div>X</div>			
	SHORT	<div><div></div>Advisory Groups</div> <div><div></div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div></div>Curriculum Development</div>					<div>X</div>		<div>X</div>			
	SHORT	<div><div></div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div>	<div>X</div>				<div>X</div>	SAMA				

Action Items			Timeframes	Strategies	Career Edge	Suncoast Workforce	EDC	Manuf. Employers	Educ. Partners	Business & Trade Assocs	Non Profits	Comm Partners
K-12 Education												
SECONDARY EDUCATION: <i>Career Academies</i> provide students with a stronger understanding of viable career pathways and educational requirements while allowing students to develop college and career readiness skills through relevant, rigorous curriculum.												
<div>11</div> <div>Target middle and high school students to develop articulated career pathways in manufacturing.</div>	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div>■</div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div>■</div>Career Academies</div> <div><div>■</div>OJT & Internship Placement</div>								X	X	
	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Advisory Groups</div> <div><div>■</div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div>■</div>Curriculum Development</div> <div><div>■</div>OJT & Internship Placement</div>		X	X		X		X			
	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div>■</div>Advisory Groups</div> <div><div>■</div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div>■</div>Career Academies</div> <div><div>■</div>Curriculum Development</div>		X	X		X		X			
	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Employment Resource Center(s)</div> <div><div>■</div>Social Media & Advertising</div> <div><div>■</div>Local Media</div>		X	X	X	X		X			
Business & Community Partnerships												
The emerging <i>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</i> will consist of employer driven forums where 1) Regional industry challenges/needs will be articulated and addressed 2) Opportunities for consortium trainings will be identified funded and accomplished 3) Employers will submit requests for funding, curriculum development or revisions and CareerEdge will serve only as the intermediary in providing the resources to resolve stated needs.												
<div>15</div> <div>Target Employers to collaborate with educational and community partners to articulate skills gap needs and identify available resources to address those needs.</div>	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div>■</div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div>■</div>Career Academies</div> <div><div>■</div>Curriculum Development</div>		X	X		X		X			
	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div>■</div>Advisory Groups</div> <div><div>■</div>Employer Engagement</div> <div><div>■</div>Career Academies</div> <div><div>■</div>Curriculum Development</div>		X	X		X		X			
	LONG	<div><div>■</div>Manufacturing Workforce Partnership</div> <div><div>■</div>Employment Resource Center(s)</div>		X	X	X	X		X			