



# General Plug and Manufacturing builds skilled talent pipeline through collaboration

With 75% of applicants lacking appropriate job skills combined with 24% of the manufacturing job growth requiring Computer Numerical Control [CNC] skills, General Plug and Manufacturing partnered on a regional CNC credentialing program using ACT WorkKeys® solutions.

## RESULTS:



100% improvement

in skilled workforce walking in the door

General Plug is leveraging high school and adult CNC apprenticeship programs to hire workers with the right and highly desirable skills.



7-14

CNC program graduates hired by General Plug each year

In addition, all 17 Right Skills Now CNC graduates are gainfully employed by local manufacturers who joined General Plug in launching the program.

## WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS USED:



## Wanted: Employees with the right skills

### THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

General Plug & Manufacturing Co, located in Oberlin & Grafton Ohio with 180 employees, is a leading manufacturer of Cold Formed, CNC, Screw Machine and Foundry standards & specials, supplied to the Automotive, Electrical, Pipe & Valve, and fastener industries

Like most manufacturers, General Plug needed a skilled talent pipeline for positions focusing on computer numerical control (CNC) machining. Despite screening, 75% of applicants still lacked appropriate job skills.

By collaborating with Lorain County Community College (LCCC), they discovered ACT WorkKeys® as a way to develop the foundational skills needed to be a successful CNC operator.

“

Growing our own talent is definitely working. We are seeing a workforce walking in the door ready to successfully fill these critical manufacturing jobs.”

**Jim Tyree**

Plant Manager  
General Plug and Manufacturing

# Collaborating on a regional talent pipeline

## THE SOLUTION

Through their coordination with Lorain County Community College (LCCC), and supported by the Lorain County Growth Partnership, General Plug joined forces with 12 companies who employ CNC operators to launch Right Skills Now (RSN), a national model developed by The Manufacturing Institute. ACT WorkKeys® and the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate™ (NCRC) is the entry-level credential for the program.

Using foundational employability skills as entry requirements helps to ensure successful outcomes for the intense occupational skills training required to be successful in CNC machining jobs. Plus, students can stack one or more National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) credentials on top of the ACT NCRC to further document their skills.

General Plug has employed graduates from each class of the Right Skills Now program at LCCC.

“

It's important to help support and shape a program like Right Skills Now, because manufacturing is going to keep growing in Lorain County.”

### Jim Tyree

Plant Manager  
General Plug and Manufacturing

## SEGMENT OVERVIEW

Located in Elyria, Ohio, Lorain County Community College focuses on helping people in the Greater Cleveland region get the training and education they need to be successful in today's rapidly evolving workplace.

“

We need to keep increasing the talent pool and increasing the number of employees who are qualified to fill manufacturing jobs in the area.”

### Jim Tyree

Plant Manager  
General Plug and Manufacturing

# Building skills at all levels

## OUTCOMES

In addition to employing Right Skills Now graduates, General Plug also partners with the Lorain County Joint Vocational School (JVS) where CNC training is offered to both high school students and adult learners.

As a part of the high school program, General Plug provides paid summer internships after the student's junior year. During their senior year, these same students are able to work in the afternoon after completing morning classes, gaining valuable work and trade experience. These students are often hired full time upon graduation and encouraged to continue their CNC education at LCCC.

The company also has a history of hiring adult learners who successfully complete the JVS Adult Career Center CNC program. One such graduate had spent twenty years in banking before losing her job. She was retrained and now loves her work at General Plug, noting that she was “born again into a great manufacturing career.”

On average, the company hires 7–14 CNC program graduates per year in total from the various programs throughout the region.

## ACT WORK READY COMMUNITIES



General Plug is one of the companies supporting Lorain County's ACT Work Ready Communities initiative, believing that it benefits all employers in the community for the county's workforce development partners to come together to help close the skills gap by means of the ACT NCRC.

See what other counties are work ready at [www.workreadycommunities.org](http://www.workreadycommunities.org).