



## ABA Quick Tips

### Using Technology to Address Barriers to Apprentice Recruitment & Retention

The purpose of this **Quick Tip** is to offer ABA grantees promising strategies for addressing barriers to recruitment and retention in Registered Apprenticeship (RA) using technology. Key objectives of ABA grants are to strengthen, modernize, expand, and diversify RA Programs to help workers earn while they learn and find reliable pathways to career success. Below are quick tips that offer strategies for leveraging technology in RA Programs.

**Quick Tips** offer short, easy to use strategies, recommendations, and tips for Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) grantee consideration, exploration, and use. The tips and recommendations listed below draw from the expertise of ABA Technical Assistance Coaches, research, and grey literature (see references below).

#### WHERE CAN GRANTEES LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY?

Technology can be used in all components of a RA Program to improve the apprentice experience and program administration. Grantees can consider expanding a program's use of technology in the following areas:

- ▶ **Recruitment.** Grantees and their partners can host online recruitment events, such as open houses and job fairs, to overcome transportation and scheduling barriers and reach a wider audience. Sharing job opportunities on job search sites (e.g. Indeed, Monster, Glassdoor, Handshake), industry-specific job boards, and social media (e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) can also help expand a program's outreach. To better reach underrepresented and target populations, post apprentice stories on social media platforms featuring apprentices from those target populations so potential applicants can see themselves represented in the program. Success stories and day-in-the-life videos can also help improve applicants' understanding of the realities of RA Programs and potentially improve retention.
- ▶ **Case management.** Consistent, quality case management is a key factor in apprentice retention. Technology can streamline case management and allow for greater efficiency, cohesion, collaboration, and transparency. One way to leverage technology to improve case management is using an electronic case management system. There are a number of case management systems available, allowing grantees to [select the system that works best for their needs](#). Having a centralized mobile application where apprentices can review their progress in completing on-the-job training (OJT) hours and related technical instruction (RTI), access administrative information, and easily communicate with case managers can help apprentices stay on track for completing their program and easily access the supports available to them. Grantees can also use a combination of tools to enhance their case management practices, such as time tracking applications, communication platforms, and employer relationship management software. For case managers that have high caseloads, electronic case management tools can improve efficiency and allow staff greater capacity to meet apprentice needs.
- ▶ **Data and reporting.** Apprentice demographic data can help grantees track the effectiveness of their recruitment campaigns and provide insights into areas of improvement. By tracking apprentice progress and performance, grantees can analyze the trajectory of program completers and non-completers to gain insight into barriers to retention and indicators that participants that may be at risk of not completing the program for early warning and intervention. There are countless applications and tools available to grantees to efficiently collect and analyze data. Examples of data management, analysis, and visualization tools include Excel, Microsoft PowerBI, Airtable, DataWrapper, and Salesforce. There are also [specialized apprenticeship management systems](#) that provide apprenticeship-specific capabilities such as recruitment tools, standards libraries, reporting tools for RAPIDS and WIPS, RTI, and OJT tracking.
- ▶ **Accessibility.** Technology is a great tool for increasing accessibility for apprentices. Grantees and their partners should utilize [Universal Design for Learning](#) principles when designing educational materials, workplace training approaches, assessments, and recruitment campaigns, to ensure that they are accessible to everyone. Education technology is rapidly advancing and offers opportunities for programs to provide materials in mobile-based applications, virtual reality,



augmented reality, animation, videos, games, and other interactive methods. These non-traditional modalities provide an engaging educational experience for apprentices that may struggle with traditional education methods. Making RTI materials available digitally allows participants to access them at any time and from any location. This is especially beneficial to participants that do not have reliable transportation to a program site or those that have variable schedules due to work, school, or dependent care and require flexibility to complete their program. As grantees embrace technology and increase access to remote learning and work experience, it is crucial to ensure that participants have access to the internet. Many low-income families, rural populations, and youth do not have reliable internet or computer access at home. RA Programs can provide participants with designated time to complete online training and review digital materials on-site to ensure equitable access.

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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