

INSTITUTE FOR A COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE – U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

180 Skills: An Accelerated Learning Model for Industry

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Joe Kitterman, founder of 180Skills LLC, recognizes that in technical education, mastery of skills counts for significantly more than time spent in the classroom. Kitterman theorizes that understanding seventy or eighty percent of the material is not enough when the quality of a product, such as an airplane, and safety are at risk. 180Skills, a content development company, applies that theory by providing a competency-based learning community through self-paced, online learning. Students learn at their own speed, demonstrate proficiency of a skill or device before proceeding, and subsequently apply their online training to on-site, hands-on laboratory instruction.

180Skills students spend their first eight weeks completing online courses which include interactive simulation with the very machines they will eventually operate in the laboratory. At the end of the second month, students enter the lab at an equal aptitude level as their peers, armed with the knowledge of how to operate the machinery. This model allows for maximization of time spent with the instructor and facilities.

Based at the Purdue Technical Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, 180Skills currently offers seven technical certificates and 70 online courses; students must earn two certificates. Through its partnership with the Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center and Boeing Co., 180Skills boasts over 1400 certificates awarded and a ninety percent graduation rate. The overwhelming majority, over ninety percent of graduates, are granted an interview with Boeing. Additionally, 180Skills has teamed up with other national leaders in aerospace manufacturing including the National Center for Aviation Training and the National University of Aeronautics Mexico. For more information on 180Skills, visit their [website here](#).