



# Eastman develops talent pipeline while improving the quality of new hires

Tennessee-based advanced manufacturer Eastman used ACT WorkKeys® solutions to find qualified applicants for available jobs.

## RESULTS:



10

job profiles

completed at Eastman including all entry-level manufacturing positions.



2,300+

individuals

in NE TN region with a WorkKeys NCRC



342

Eastman employees

with NCRC successfully completed apprenticeship training from 2015-17

## WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS USED:



## Finding the right applicants for the right jobs

### THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Headquartered in Kingsport, Tennessee, Eastman is an advanced materials and specialty additives company that produces a wide range of products found in items that people use every day. Serving customers in more than 100 countries, Eastman employs over 14,000 people.

In 1997, Eastman began have trouble finding enough qualified applicants for available jobs. Given the global company's size and scope, hiring was a time consuming, expensive, and frustrating process.

To develop their talent pipeline, Eastman turned to ACT WorkKeys® solutions.

“

ACT WorkKeys has been a tremendous help by showing us who has initiative by successfully taking WorkKeys and achieving the scores needed to walk in the door ready to be trained to safely and effectively run a chemical plant.”

**Todd Akard**  
Recruiter  
Eastman

# Increasing applications, improving skills

## THE SOLUTION

The ACT WorkKeys® assessment system is integrated into Eastman's hiring and selection process both for external candidates and current employees. Eastman uses ACT WorkKeys for hiring all entry-level manufacturing positions.

Once employed, individuals complete specialized structured training outlines specific for Eastman. In addition, employees that want to advance may apply to enter the Eastman specific USDOL-registered apprenticeship programs if they have the entry level WorkKeys scores required. If individuals are not yet at the foundational skill levels to enter the program, they can use the ACT Curriculum to skill up.

Eastman also partners with Northeast State Community College through the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing (RCAM) for their apprenticeship program and other job-related education and career development leveraging information and insights gleaned through the ACT Job Profile process to develop these training programs. This partnership includes providing a principal coordinator to help not only train the Eastman workforce but to help also develop the technical skills necessary for success for all companies. These programs ensure the needed technical skills and competencies are in place.

## Company results, community impact

### OUTCOMES

In addition to growing their own talent pipeline and improving the skill levels of new hires, Eastman is also committed to building the regional workforce through their involvement in ACT Work Ready Communities. Eastman remains very active in support of Pre-K through 14+ educational initiatives through the Putting Children First partnership (PCF), in place since the early 1990s.

Eastman and NSCC have received recognition by numerous organizations for their Advanced Manufacturing Partnership, which helps steer RCAM. It has been recognized at national, state, and regional levels:

- 2013 – RCAM recognized in Brookings Institution's Advanced Industry Series as being a model for technical education and training in the State of Tennessee.
- 2013 – RCAM is the centerpiece in NSCC's recognition by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) for Outstanding College/Corporate Partnership.
- 2012 – RCAM recognized by Tennessee Alliance for Continuing Higher Education for outstanding and innovative noncredit programming.
- 2009–present – RCAM is featured in numerous regional media outlets, including regional economic development marketing literature, and welcomes over 200 visitors from across the state and the country seeking to tour the facility and understand its model.

“

At Eastman we want good-paying jobs and rewarding career opportunities for everyone in our community. And engaging in ACT Work Ready Communities is enabling us to work with other business and community leaders to introduce students and residents to ACT WorkKeys and the ACT WorkKeys NCRC and how it can help them take charge of their career decisions – whether seeking employment or furthering their education and training – we want everyone in Northeast Tennessee to be ready for success. I am thankful to work for a company that allows me to do that.”

**Tanya Foreman**

Education Initiatives Manager  
Eastman

## SEGMENT OVERVIEW

As community engagement grew, Eastman came to rely on workforce partners like the Northeast Tennessee Career Center and Northeast State Community College (NSCC) to provide testing and to issue the corresponding ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)® credential.

“

ACT WorkKeys assessments that comprise the WorkKeys NCRC are good indicators of a person's learning potential which will, hopefully, lead to successful completion of apprenticeship and structured training programs for Eastman's advanced manufacturing jobs such as industrial mechanics, chemical operators, and lab analysts.”

**Laurey Conway**

Manufacturing Training Associate  
Eastman

## ACT WORK READY COMMUNITIES



Eastman is one of 99 companies in the Northeast Tennessee region that recognize or recommend the ACT NCRC. The company was one of the first to support Sullivan County's application to become a certified ACT Work Ready Community. There are now a total of nine counties in the region participating in ACT WRC. Eastman has helped educate other employers in the area on the benefits of the ACT NCRC.

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

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