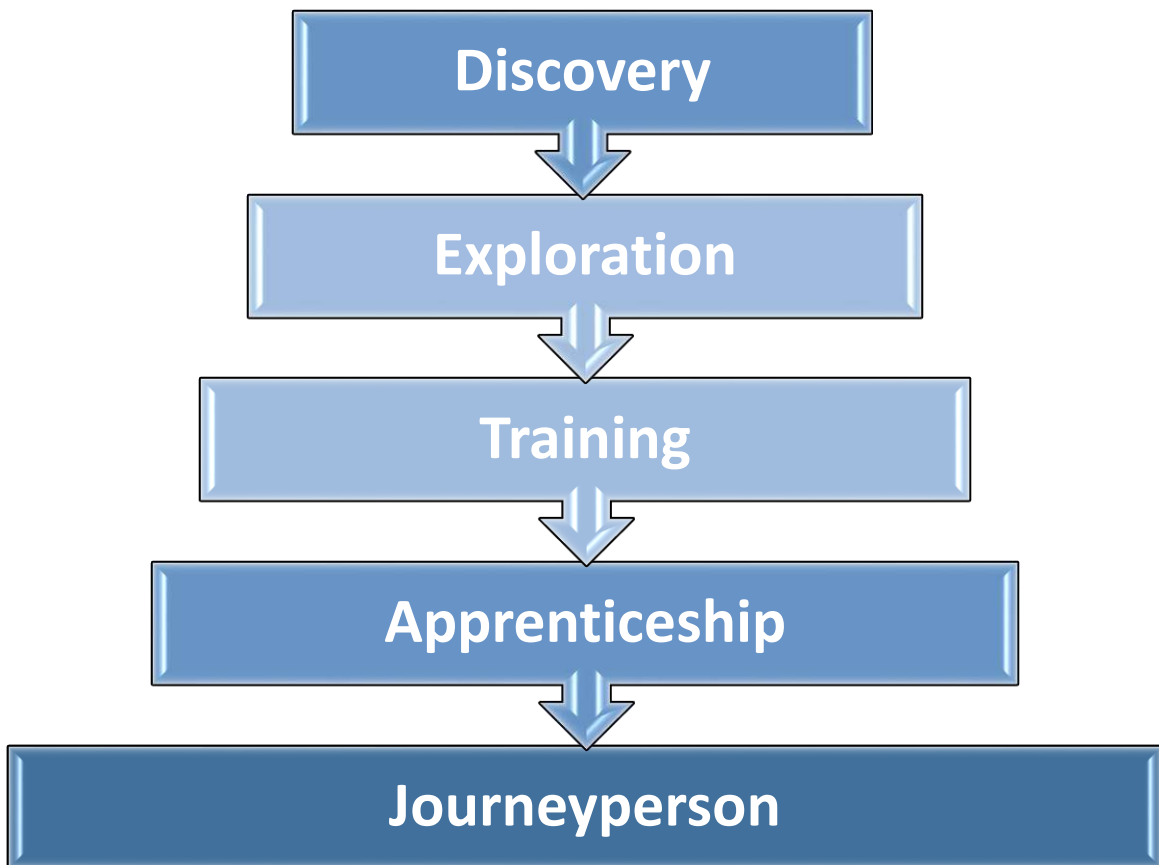


Skills, Trades & Apprenticeship

Hybrid Training Model



A Collaborative Model Based On Best Practises

Employer demand for skilled tradespeople far exceeds the available supply and it is a critical priority for our communities to increase the number of apprentices and journeypersons in the local labour market that have the skills to support the growth and expansion of local business and industry.

The purpose of this report is to source best practises from various models dedicated to training and development. The goal is to create a hybrid training model that will increase the number of individuals in the local labour pool that have the necessary skills to pursue a career in the trades.

To achieve this goal, this report highlights activities and concepts that have historically achieved the highest levels of success in recruitment and training. These best practises span from the initial recruitment phase to ensuring the individual is on the best career path suited to their interest and aptitude; from job readiness training through to apprenticeship; from clear outcomes and objectives to developing highly marketable and “in-demand” skills and competencies.

By reviewing various models and focusing on best practises that lead to success, the hybrid model contained within this report creates the opportunity for successful outcomes in addition to mitigating some existing identified barriers.

The Grand Valley Educational Society would like to extend our appreciation to our community partners who were instrumental in providing data, statistics and input on the project. It is our hope that the strategies contained within this report will create a new vision that will contribute to the transformation of skilled trades training and generate new models and programs that can be applied provincially and nationally.

This project has been funded through generosity of the Rural Economic Development program through the:



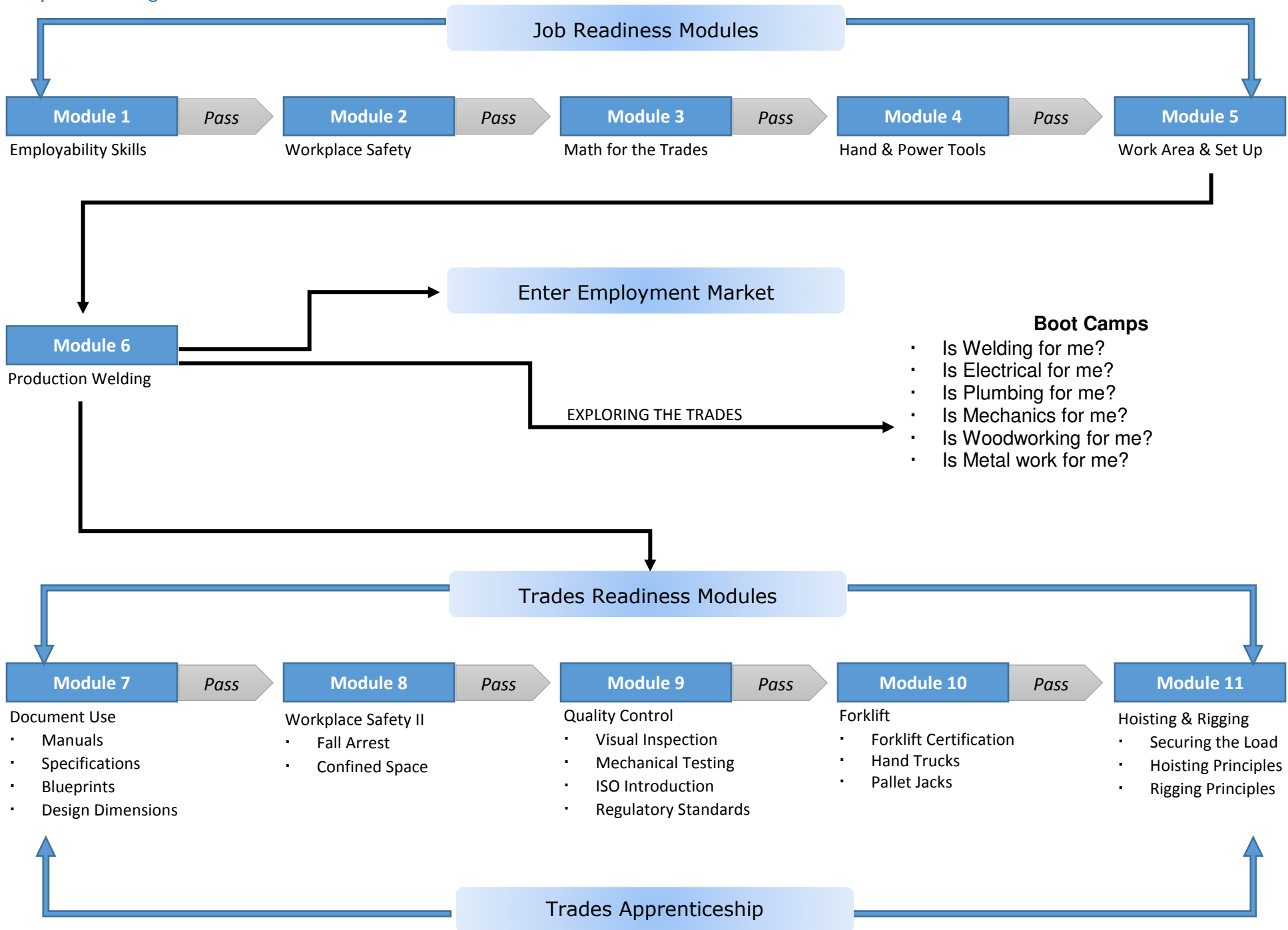
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Ontario.

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Hybrid Training Model Schematic



Hybrid Training Model

Hybrid (def.) a combination of two or more different things.

A [shortage](#) of skilled trade workers and certified journeypersons is plaguing the national, provincial and local labour markets. Employer demand for skilled tradespeople far exceeds the available supply. This skills gap is having a measurable, detrimental [impact](#) on business and industry specifically: increased costs (overtime); inability to meet current production requirements; barriers to expanding both the scope and volume of work and; the inability to expand into new business opportunities.

The intent of this report is to review existing models of collaboration including: Consortiums, Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees/Councils, Work placements and, Advisories, with the goal of identifying best practises of each model. To highlight the activities and concepts that achieved the highest levels of success and translate these into a hybrid training model for skills, trades and apprenticeship training.

During the initial stages of data collection, it became evident that, in order to craft a hybrid model, it was imperative that the project begin with the final objective of the hybrid training model – to increase the number of people in the local labour pool that have the necessary skills to pursue a career in the trades.

This information would be utilized as the foundation for sourcing the relevant best practises from various models that would either support high levels of success and outcomes or mitigate existing, identified barriers.

“We have been forced to shift some of our production to Poland.”

“We won’t be able to continue this level of growth without a steady access to skilled trade workers.”

“With the correct skilled trades’ people, we could easily increase and expand our business, sales and volume and even perhaps the scope of work being performed.”

“We are fully staffed now for the first time in 5 years.”

“There is stress and strain on our existing workforce, due to the volume of overtime.”

“The work is available, but I simply don’t have the staff to fill any more work orders.”

The Common Denominator

The objective is clear – to increase the number of people in the local labour pool that have both a high level of interest and the necessary skills and competencies to pursue a career in the trades. Achieving this objective will require a collaborative approach involving multiple community stakeholders.

Community stakeholders working together in a collaborative approach to addressing a skills shortage is not a new concept - Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees can be traced back to the 1800's. Stakeholders including business and industry, trainers and educators, employment support organizations and, all levels of government have implemented numerous collaborative initiatives over the years to improve the skills and competencies of local labour pools to meet evolving needs of business and industry.

However, factors such as: a [surging economy](#); looming retirements; the evolution of the workplace; evolving competencies; a shrinking labour pool and; an overall lack of awareness and interest in skilled trade careers has created a critical shortage requiring immediate attention—and an improved plan of action.

It is widely accepted that the workplace has seen impressive and substantial transitions, particularly with the advances in technology related to manufacturing. Any approach to developing skills and competencies requires a strategy that will meet these new expectations—the approach to training and development of trades' people will need to transform using new and innovative methods based on historical best practises.

Throughout the report reference is made to trades and apprenticeship training. Although subtle, this distinction is important when defining the training model. Trades training is developing skills for a particular trade or craft. A tradesperson is a professional with a high degree of both practical and theoretical knowledge of a trade and a journeyman is an individual who has achieved a level of certification in their trade (after completing their apprenticeship and passing their Certificate of Qualification).

What is particularly important about this distinction is that not everyone who receives trades training will pursue an apprenticeship and/or ultimately journeyman status, particularly in the voluntary trades (as defined by the Ontario College of Trades). How far an individual will progress in their career is dependent on numerous factors, but perhaps most important, whether they have the interest and aptitude to become a certified journeyman.

What is evident, is that employers need to be able to recruit and retain highly skilled workers to address skills shortages and to maintain productivity and global growth. The local labour force needs to have the skills and competencies that not only meet industry standards but will also develop a future workforce that is dedicated to greater productivity, high quality standards on the job and are willing to grow with business and industry.

Why Collaboration?

Coopetition (Wikipedia) – *Coopetition¹ is a word coined from cooperation and competition. It is used when companies, otherwise competitors, collaborate in a consortium to cooperate on areas non-strategic for their core businesses; they prefer to reduce their costs on these non-strategic areas.*

Historically, when a group of stakeholders with a common goal and vested interest work together, they have realized substantial benefits through the sharing of expertise and resources. This is particularly evident when addressing a severe gap in the skills and competencies of a local labour pool.

A unified approach to training investments can lead to success in:

- (a) reducing individual employer costs associated with training and development;
- (b) improving consistency in employee development and succession planning;
- (c) increasing employer participation from small, medium and large business enterprises;
- (d) ensuring a strong return on investment to training for participating employers;
- (e) increasing the interest in the career through guaranteed work placements;
- (f) increasing the potential for long term, sustainable employment; and
- (g) creating a workforce with a broader range of "in demand" competencies.

Our goal is to develop a hybrid model based on the best practises of existing collaborative training concepts – a model that can be widely adopted and applied by employers, other sectors and other communities.

A collaborative approach can realize additional benefits beyond a collective approach to training and development of a labour pool. Collaboration is a highly successful approach to:

- (a) increasing awareness of career paths and opportunities that are trade or sector specific;
- (b) improving recruiting strategies. An individual connected with a consortium connects with multiple employers, and becomes part of the labour pool;
- (c) keeping abreast of legislative requirements;
- (d) sharing information on government subsidies and incentives for developing a workforce;
- (e) improving knowledge and streamlining of applying for programs and incentives;
- (f) sourcing candidates that match business trends, both in timing (volume of work) and skills sets;
- (g) improving knowledge of registering apprentices; and
- (h) advocating for training that is more responsive to changing sector needs.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coopetition>

Primary Components to Developing a Skilled Trades Labour Pool

Discussions with local employers and a review of available local research has identified that there are four primary components to increasing the local trades labour pool, and that each component has a critical role to play in the overall success of developing a skilled trades' labour force:

Discovery:

- Getting candidates interested in the trades as a career; building projects, creating things, learning how trades are evolving with new technologies. This discovery stage is a process during which interest and aptitude are identified for a trades' career.

Exploration:

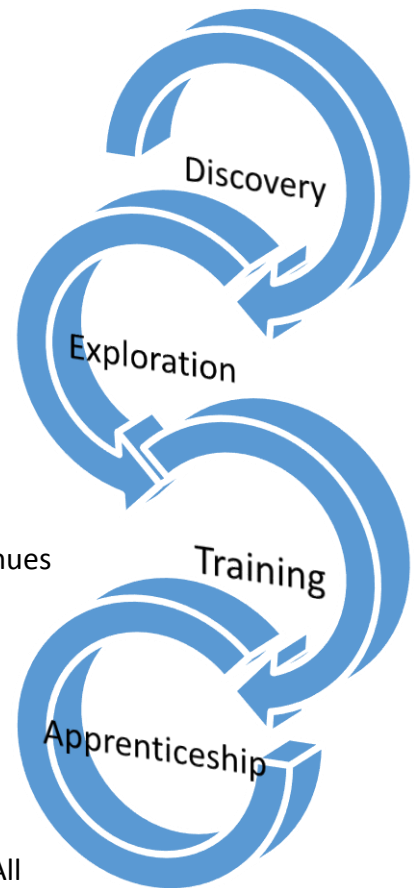
- Providing hands-on opportunities for candidates to actually learn skills associated with the trades. An opportunity to learn about advancement opportunities, local employment opportunities, wages and work environment. This is not only about working on "real life" projects, it includes becoming comfortable with tools, taking tours of area businesses, talking to mentors and individuals from a wide variety of trades.

Trades Training:

- This is the combination of theory and practical training that continues to be geared towards skills sets and competencies applicable to a career in the trades. Trades training needs to encompass specific skills sets that are in high demand by employers.

Apprenticeship:

- The final stage and commitment to a specific trade, where the candidate secures an apprenticeship with an employer sponsor. All activities leading up to this final stage ensures that the candidate has made a conscious choice to pursue a specific trade based on interest and aptitude – something that employers and trade associations have identified as being vital to the success of an apprentice.



Main Concepts to the Hybrid Model

1. Standardization and consistency in applicant intake and assessment:

Trade associations have perhaps the most rigorous intake and assessment process which is a combination of interest and aptitude testing, personal interviews and in some cases, a probationary period. This is a stepped or ladder process which requires the candidate to achieve a successful rating in each process prior to proceeding. The candidate must pass the interest and aptitude test (minimum pass rate) prior to proceeding into the personal interview stage. If the candidate is successful in both stages, they are a candidate for hire. However, some associations require a probationary period prior to signing the individual on for an apprenticeship.

The challenge is that the testing and interview process varies from association to association and is specifically targeted to the specific trade. The goal of the hybrid training model would be to create a standardized interest and aptitude assessment that would identify the candidates' potential for success in trades in general. A more general approach would enable the candidate to not only become aware of areas of improvement, but more importantly, ascertain their suitability for multiple career paths in the trades.

2. Modular and ladder training:

A modular methodology of skills and competency training would achieve a variety of outcomes all leading to best practises and success including:

- Candidates would be required to successfully achieve a passing grade prior to proceeding into more complex components. Ultimately, the goal is to assist the candidate in achieving their full potential and career success;
- Each module of training would have specific and measurable outcomes (rubrics) to ensure consistency in assessment;
- Each module of training would incorporate skills and competencies that would enable the candidate to achieve employment at the end of each module; and
- Employers would have the opportunity to send existing employees into specific modules for skills upgrading.

3. Training in skills and competencies:

The primary focus of the hybrid module would be to develop skills and competencies that are not only applicable to numerous career paths in the trades but are also skills and competencies in high demand by business and industry. This concept would effectively alleviate “failures” – even if the individual is not interested or suited to a particular trade, they would still have acquired transferable skills required by business and industry.

By eliminating “trade specific” training in the early stages of career pathing and training, skills developed are applicable to multiple trades which could then lead to either apprenticeship or to employment opportunities. Recognizing that not everyone who has an interest in trades as a career path, possesses the necessary aptitude to succeed in an apprenticeship, the hybrid training model would still provide sufficient training in skills and competencies that would enable the candidate to successfully obtain employment.

4. *Sharing of Expertise & Resources:*

A centralized group of employers who have a common and vested interest in developing a trades' labour force provides the ideal opportunity to share both expertise and resources. A consortium of regional employers has the potential to develop world-class training practises that advance the success of employers in securing candidates in skilled trades.

Key advantages include:

- Companies work together to develop in-house mentors and coaches;
- Companies can advocate for a candidate who may not be suited to their organization, but are still suited to a particular trade;
- A “centralized” point of access for candidates looking to enter a specific trade;
- Standardized best practises for: intake & assessment; orientation; training & outcomes; increasing the skill levels of apprentices;
- Reduced pressure on a single employer to meet the full scope of skills required by an apprenticeship;
- Coordinated and unified approach to supplemental and/or specialized training;
- Shared knowledge and potential assistance in accessing government sponsored incentives and other financial supports to offset the costs of training apprentices;
- Ongoing supports to existing journeypersons; and
- Opportunities for employers to utilize the expertise of an impartial third party for voicing of concerns.

5. *Candidate Monitoring:*

A common thread identified through all best practises is the need, and increased potential for success, through regular, scheduled monitoring of candidates, which is directly tied to outcomes and objectives.

From the candidate who is participating in pre-apprenticeship or trades readiness training through to the apprentice in their final year of apprenticeship, regular monitoring can identify challenges and barriers in the early stages. If attendance is an issue – perhaps the person is not job ready. If the candidate requires upskilling to achieve a promotion – monitoring can identify patterns of required training and/or certifications.

As with any decision making or problem solving, implementing the solution is not the final step. Monitoring and adjusting to achieve a positive outcome is critical to long term success and career sustainability.

The general consensus for monitoring is as follows:

- During trades readiness training: an impartial third party would connect with the instructor of the program to identify potential candidate issues such as; attendance, attitude, performance. If a potential issue has been identified, a personal interview would be scheduled with the participant.
- During employment and apprenticeship: monitoring should be done by an impartial third party monthly during the first year of employment, and quarterly thereafter.

Best Practises – Training

Best practises focus on successful outcomes. Best practises in training will (a) increase the number of people in the local labour pool that have the necessary skills to pursue a career in trades and, (b) ensure these individuals have the skills, competencies and supports that will lead to gainful employment that capitalizes on both their interest and aptitude.

As this project is highlighting best practises for trades and apprenticeship training, it is interesting to note that many trades have similar skill sets and competencies.

New entrants into the trades often do not appreciate the full scope of skills required to succeed. Blending of skills is paramount and these blended skills include: **essential skills** (literacy, numeracy); **employability skills** (communication, problem solving, analytical thinking); **organizational skills** (customer service, written reports, inventory management, just in time delivery); **technical skills** for advanced technologies and processes; and the demand for individuals who possess **multiple tickets/certifications** applicable to a specific sector or industry.

An ideal hybrid training model is a training program of skills and competencies based not only on the blending of skills, but also in developing skills that are “universally” required by multiple trades and can lead to apprenticeships **or** results in the candidate developing a set of skills that are in high demand by business and industry and can lead directly to employment.

An individual who chooses not to pursue an apprenticeship would have highly marketable skills that are well suited to positions in, for example, production and manufacturing. The employer is then provided the option to work with the candidate to develop their skills through additional “in house” training that will not only build on the candidates’ interest and aptitude but will simultaneously assist the employer in developing their internal labour force.

Potential Gap:

Current trades training is often narrow in scope and does not provide the opportunity to develop blended skills.

Solution:

- Create a foundation training program for trades that creates a blending of skills (see next page).

Potential Gap:

Individuals wishing to pursue a trade may not know how to pursue the trade (entrance requirements, training availability) or where local employment opportunities exist.

Solution:

- Identify a central point of communication to assist the individual in accessing available resources and information.

Trades Readiness Modular Training

“Trades Readiness” training has been designed with the following intended outcomes:

- increasing the number of candidates registered as apprentices in trades that are in high demand;
- increasing the success of apprentices in trades that are best suited to their interests and aptitude;
- creating a “best fit” scenario that will ultimately result in high success rates for apprentices achieving their Certificate of Qualification; and
- providing ALL candidates with skills and competencies in high demand by business and industry. Should a candidate decide not to pursue apprenticeship or is not well suited to the trades, they would still possess highly marketable skills that are in demand and could ultimately result in employment.

Although each focus group had their own reasoning behind trades’ readiness training, this has been identified as a critical element to success. In general, the driving forces to creating a trades’ readiness training program are:

1. Develop skills and competencies that are applicable to multiple entry level positions;
 2. Utilize the readiness training as a tool to determine the job readiness of the individual;
 3. Provide training and coaching in core employability skills;
 4. Provide technical skills training that is a foundation to entering multiple trades related careers; and
 5. Offer training designed in modules, with clear benchmarks and outcomes for each module. An individual in the training program would be required to successfully complete each module prior to proceeding further in the training program.
-
1. Develop skills and competencies that are applicable to multiple entry level positions:
To ensure that training dollars result in a strong return on investment, the individual would develop competencies that enable them to pursue multiple employment opportunities. These transferrable skills would be applicable to multiple points of entry for employment, and not solely focused on skilled trades and/or apprenticeships. Should the individual decide not to pursue skilled trades or apprenticeship, they could still complete the training program with a skill set that is highly desirable by businesses in manufacturing sectors.
 2. Utilize the readiness training as a tool to determine job readiness of the individual:
Lateness, absenteeism and poor work ethic were repeatedly identified by all focus groups as a major barrier to retaining new hires. The trades’ readiness training would be utilized as an initial screening tool to determine whether the individual was “job ready”. The program should be structured with a zero tolerance for unacceptable behaviour in addition to strict guidelines regarding absenteeism and lateness. The consensus is that any training program should be modelled after a typical work day and typical work environment and focus on such areas as: attendance, responsible breaks, completing assigned work (productivity), worksite cleanliness, becoming a strong team contributor and, setting goals.

3. Provide training and coaching in core employability skills:

Consensus is that many new hires do not possess the necessary core employability skills required for success in an employment situation. Specific skills that were highlighted include: communication, problem solving, analytical thinking, motivation, initiative, conflict resolution, and the self-directed team.

4. Provide technical skills training that is a foundation for entering multiple trades related careers:

Feedback on trades' related careers has determined that there are multiple common denominators and competencies across multiple trades and both employers and trade associations often look for the same skill sets for new hires.

The trades' readiness program would focus on creating this strong foundation of skill sets ideal for an entry level position. Candidates who opt for employment at this stage will have a strong skill set that will enable employers to further invest in the candidate through "in-house" training and focus training on both the interest and aptitude of the candidate for future career development. Key areas identified include: workplace safety; reading drawings and specifications; document use; setting up and maintaining a work area; quality control and testing; technical math; preventative and predictive maintenance; hoisting, rigging and lifting; forklift licensing and measuring.

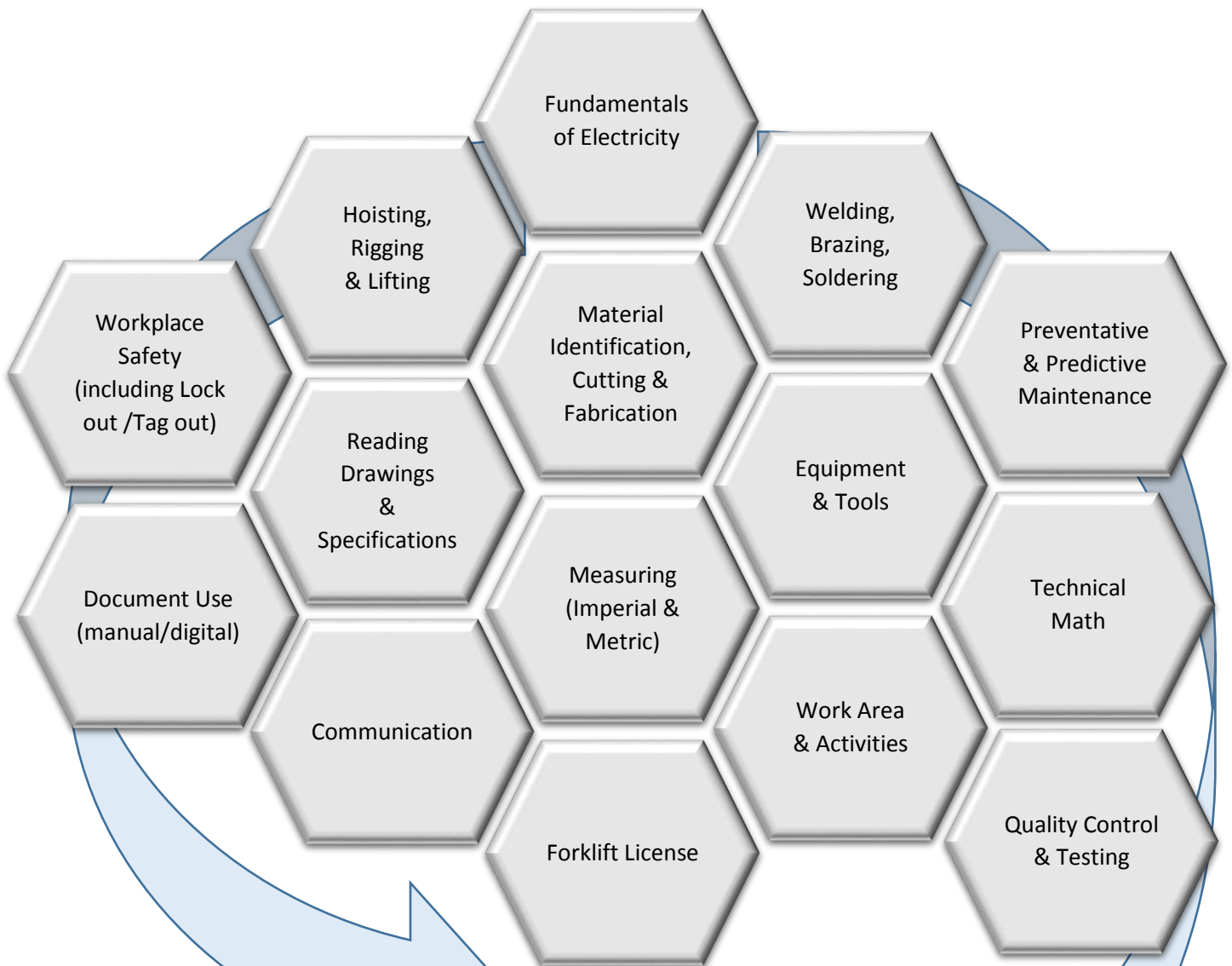
Increasing the overall skill base of an individual would substantially increase their marketability to business and industry. A wise dollar investment in training will result in the individual being provided with multiple pathways to employment, versus a single path. This concept would effectively alleviate "failures" – if the individual is not interested or suited to a particular trade, they would still have acquired highly desirable skills required by business and industry.

5. Training should be designed in modules, with clear benchmarks and outcomes for each module. An individual in the training program would be required to successfully complete each module prior to proceeding.

This is the A,B,C,D's of training – Activity Based Career Development, which allows an individual to achieve their full potential. This method of training has the potential to eliminate substantial investment of training dollars in an individual who simply may not be job ready and/or may not be suited to an apprenticeship in a skilled trade.

Each module will develop a specific set of competencies required to be successful in sustaining employment – in multiple pathways. Employers have stated emphatically that training programs do not eliminate their need to invest in future training opportunities for their workforce, but they would like to build on existing skill sets a candidate already possesses.

The modular training concept is also well suited to employers who would like to send people (from their existing workforce) for specific training to further develop their employees' skills and competencies.



Employment:

- skills developed that are in high demand by area employers

Skilled Trades:

- increased skills and exposure to multiple trades including: Millwright, Electrician, Metal Fabricator, Plumber, Welder Sheet Metal Worker, Steamfitter/Pipefitter, Ironworker, Carpenter
- ✓ Modular format allowing employers to “slot” in existing employees for training and/or exposure to specific modules.
- ✓ Provides opportunities for individuals to identify additional interests and aptitude for future multiple certifications.

Trades Readiness – Universal Training Modules

Module One -----Employability Skills

- Communication
- Problem Solving & Decision Making
- Conflict Management & Resolution
- Self-Directed Team
- Motivation & Initiative
- Analytical Thinking

Module Two -----Workplace Safety

- Safe Work Practises
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- WHMIS
- Right of Refusal

Module Three -----Trades Related Math

- Refresher and/or Upgrading
- Fractions
- Conversions
- Geometric Calculations
- Measuring (Imperial & Metric)

Module Four-----Basic Hand & Power Tools

- Wrenches, pliers, cutters, hammers, screwdrivers, vises, clamps, knives, layout square
- Drill, impact driver, grinders, sanders, cutters
- Manufacturers guidelines for preventative maintenance

Module Five -----Work Area & Activities

- Planning the Work Day
- Setting Up the Worksite/Workstation
- Worksite Housekeeping

Module Six -----Production Welding²

- This skill is in high demand not only in production and manufacturing, but is also a skills requirement for multiple skilled trades

² At the time of this report, employers in the Brantford-Brant region have in excess of 300 openings for production welders

Trades Readiness – Universal Training Modules cont'd

Module Seven-----Document Use

- Production, Incident & Progress Reports
- Manuals & Specifications
- Introduction to Documents for Design, Location and Dimensions of the Work Requirements

Module Eight-----Workplace Safety II

- Occupational Health & Safety Act/Joint Health & Safety Committees
- Lock Out/Tag Out
- Machine Guarding
- Fall Arrest
- Confined Space

Module Nine-----Quality Control & Testing

- Visual & Mechanical Quality Control Tools and Techniques
- Introduction to ISO Standards
- Expense of Recalls and Poor Quality

Module Ten-----Forklift License

- Certified Forklift Training
- Hand Trucks, Pallet Jack

Module Eleven-----Hoisting, Rigging & Lifting

- Safe Lifting Practises
- Principles of Hoisting & Principles of Rigging
- Securing the Load

Choosing a Trade

An individual may do exceptionally well on their aptitude test, have a real desire to work in the trades, and aced the interview – however, they failed to succeed in their apprenticeship – Why? Lack of initial exposure to the trade they decided to pursue as an apprentice!

Exposure to the basic skills required for a trade is particularly important for individuals who may not have the experience in or knowledge of, a variety of occupations or work situations. A best practice solution is to introduce the individual to the basic skills required for a **variety of trades**, with a focus on trades that are in high demand in the geographic area. Pursuing a trade with little chance of securing an apprenticeship is simply not a good investment of resources.

Creating a series of one week “boot camps” is a viable solution! Each week would highlight a different trade and participants would be “hands-on” with the foundation skills required for the trade. For example, in the Brantford-Brant area, suitable workshops would be:

- Welding
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Mechanics
- Woodworking
- Metal Fabrication

The creation of a one week, intensely focused program would not only provide exposure to the trade, but would incorporate other key elements that could lead to success in the trade including: career path opportunities, local employment opportunities, entry requirements and tools for success. By structuring each trade into a one week time slot, individuals could choose which trade camps to register for.

As the purpose of the boot camps is to provide exposure and solidify interest and aptitude, these camps should be provided free to participants. To ensure long term sustainability, partnerships and alliances will be critical to the success of the camps and would need to incorporate sharing of facilities and expertise. For example, the camps could be offered at: secondary or post-secondary institutions after hours; at local businesses and industries who do not operate 24/7 or; trade association training facilities.

Potential Gap:

First hand, real world exposure to a trade is not always available.

Solution:

- Provide a series of “boot camps” designed specifically for (a) secondary schools and (b) individuals in career exploration
 - Is Welding for me?
 - Is Electrical for me?
 - Is Plumbing for me?
 - Is Mechanics for me?
 - Is Woodworking for me?
 - Is Metal work for me?
- Boot camps would be free to participants and could be offered:
 - After hours at educational facilities (secondary/post-secondary)
 - After hours at local businesses or industry locations
 - To simultaneously assess employability skills and job readiness (attendance, attitude etc.)

Best Practises – Discovery & Exploration

Best Practises:

- Actively promote trades as a sustainable, rewarding (financially and interest/career wise) and viable career path using various tools, methods and information best suited to the specific target market; and
- Hands-on and experiential learning whenever possible.

Rationale:

- Lack of awareness of the potential that exists within the trades not only for employment but also for career advancement;
- Awareness can be achieved through increased exposure to the trades;
- Learning is more effective when the learner can apply what they have been taught. Interest needs to be coupled with aptitude – a combination of “see” and “do”; and
- Experiencing the trade in a real-world setting *prior* to investing time and resources into education or training substantially increases the potential for success and completion.

Target Markets:

- Elementary Schools (up to grade 8)
- Secondary Schools (grades 9-12)
- Individuals in Career Exploration (to include unemployed, underemployed, those in career transition, new comers and underrepresented markets)

Current Community Activities – Grades 8-12:

- EPIC Jobs – annual event
- Manufacturing Day – annual event
- Jill of all Trades – Conestoga College
- Organized Chaos – mentorship in building trades
- “We Make it Here” videos developed by the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie

Potential Gap:

Elementary and secondary schools may not have the knowledge of local employers who are willing to provide:

- In school presentations
- In school demonstrations
- On-site plant tours

Solution:

- Develop an on-line database where employers can register and indicate which services they are able to provide; and
- Companies with similar trade needs would collaborate to develop-interactive and hands-on mobile demonstrations.

Potential Gap:

Individuals in career exploration have a greater interest in

- who is hiring
- hiring criteria
- anticipated rate of pay
- credit for prior learning and/or experience

Solution:

- Develop a once per month “Spotlight on (company)”, modelled after the Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours - each month a different company would “host” an open house (open to the public); and
- Ideally there would be a pre-set schedule of at least six months (hosts) to be broadcast and advertised throughout the communities.

Mandatory Work Placements

It has been identified repeatedly that “hands-on” exposure is vital to assisting individuals in finding the “right fit” which is critical to the future success of the candidate; whether pursuing a career in the trades or as an apprentice. Work placements provide an individual with invaluable learning experiences that are not only related to a specific trade, but also to a variety of work settings.

Whether in career exploration or looking to secure an apprenticeship **all** candidates should be required to complete a work placement, **prior** to entering the trade as a career path. Work placements should incorporate exposure to multiple work settings which may span from smaller custom businesses and industries to larger corporations who utilize the trades, such as production or manufacturing.

Successful work placements also require a firm commitment from employers, and unfortunately the real cost to employers that provide these placements is often not recognized. The commitment of time and expertise is substantial.

To mitigate this employer investment, initial work placements should be unpaid, with a set and established maximum time line which should not exceed one month.

The value of these work placements cannot be overstated. It is a proven method for:

- Gaining practical work experience in areas that complement personal strengths, interests and can help to identify educational needs;
- Experiential learning as a responsible team member in the “real world”;
- Creating a network between employers and potential new hires which can facilitate the individuals entry into the workplace or career path;
- Confirming a career decision prior to making substantial investments in post-secondary education;
- Creating the opportunity to practice skills and theory already learned;
- Obtaining valuable feedback from employers, individuals and trainers; and
- Creating a flexible and responsive concept that is time based and focused on long term success.

However, for work placements to be successful, employer commitment is vital. A collaborative effort (e.g. consortium or coalition) between local businesses and industries is an ideal model to achieve this commitment. A collaborative effort can address business issues that may impact the ability of any one employer providing a work placement due to (e.g.) insufficient business volume or excessive business volume and mentor availability.

Creating a pool of employers committed to providing work placements, reduces the pressure on any one sector or any one employer and increases the opportunities for individuals to receive mentorship in the initial stages of their career development.

(Sample employer commitment letter on following page.)

Sample– Employer Letter of Intent to Provide Work Placements

(Employer) will select candidates from the training program following their normal selection process. Recruitment and selection of candidates may result in a mismatch, if either the (employer) or the candidate feels that the relationship is not suitable, a written notice of withdrawal is to be presented to the other party at least two weeks in advance and the notice should clearly indicate reasons for the withdrawal.

The (employer) may offer (a) part-time employment and/or (b) paid work placement opportunities to candidates while they are participating in the training program. The employer will, at a minimum, provide feedback to the candidate during and at the end of any work placement.

Candidates must maintain a Grade Point Average of (70%) or higher for the duration of the program, with no failures in any module. The candidate will provide the employer with a copy of any transcripts/proof of successful completion. Further, candidates must maintain an attendance record of (95%) or better throughout the duration of the training program.

Best Practises – Apprenticeship

The current and well-established educational system in Ontario allows an Ontario Secondary School graduate, in the last year of secondary school, to apply on-line to a college or university – a relatively simple and straightforward process. A career in the trades, however, requires the individual to find an employer, gain on-the-job experience, convince the employer to sign them as an apprentice, and then the individual must register and pay to become an apprentice;

An apprenticeship is a major investment of resources for both the employer and the individual. Apprenticeship completion rates and the success rates in obtaining a Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) varies widely from trade to trade.

As the purpose is to focus on best practises, the report benchmarked trade associations with an apprenticeship completion rate of 80% or better. Factors identified as attributing to high completion and success rates include:

- Intensive screening and assessment processes for new hires;
- Knowledge of supports for the trades such as the Federal Government’s Apprenticeship Incentive Grant, Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit and Tradespersons Tools Deduction;
- Regular monitoring of apprentices;
- Strategies to address the remedial needs of apprentices;
- An impartial “third party” for both employers and apprentices to voice concerns;
- Scheduled and constant contact with local business and industry partners to determine business trends, training needs or upskilling/re-skilling of existing hires;
- Supplementary training offered to partners that reflects changes in industry demands;
- Trade specific preparatory courses for the Certificate of Qualification. Colleges typically offer an 8-hour preparatory course with over 1,000 questions, which is often overwhelming for apprentices. Trade Associations take a more targeted approach with fewer questions that are directly relevant to the exam; and
- Alternative methods for Certificate of Qualification preparatory course including in-class, on-line, 1:1 tutors or combinations of methods.

Comparative Models & Definitions

During the research phase, it was determined that each of the following concepts may have subtle differences depending on the region, sector or trade they represent. The definitions listed below are those that are most common, or generally accepted, terms of reference for the concept and intent of each model.

Consortium/Coalition

Loosely defined a consortium or coalition is an association of two or more individuals, companies, organizations or governments (or any combination thereof) with the objective of participation in a common activity or pooling of resources to achieve a common goal.

Consortiums act as a hub for connecting, employers, industry associations, sector groups and employment support organizations with appropriate employment and training services. Consortiums work to identify and respond to labour market and workforce development challenges and opportunities in the trades.

Essentially, the consortium acts as a broker between workers seeking employment and employers seeking skilled qualified workers. Consortiums can be either formal (registered with the appropriate Ministries and government departments) or informal (acting as a coordinator for activities, without being a formally registered entity).

Formal Consortiums – MTCU Sponsor Agreement: Apprentices

A formal consortium acts as the employer/sponsor during an apprenticeship and is registered with MTCU (Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities). Formal consortiums will be the employer of record during the apprenticeship and fulfill the obligations of registering the apprentices and overseeing all the administrative coordination of recruiting, placing and scheduling apprentices across multiple employer worksites. It is also important to note that if the consortium is taking on the role of remuneration for the apprentices, they must be a registered entity with Revenue Canada.

In cases where the consortium is acting as the “sponsor”, although they may execute all the administrative functions associated with the apprentices, they do not have the authority to sign off on training standards – this activity must be completed by the employer the apprentice is working for.

Important Note:

At the time of this report there does not exist within MTCU or the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act (2009), guidelines or legislation regarding group sponsorship. Consortium parameters when registering with MTCU are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Informal Consortiums (Coalitions)

Informal consortiums operate much the same as a registered consortium to support all the activities associated with the administrative coordination of recruiting, placing and scheduling apprentices/employees. However, the key distinction is that they are not the employer of record and are not involved in any legal binding agreements or remunerations for the apprentice/employee – this is the responsibility of the individual employers.

Consortium Best Practises

A consortium/coalition creates a shared responsibility for the administration and training of new hires and is a suitable model that encourages participation from small, medium and large size companies.

Consortiums provide a collective value to members: the sharing of expertise; the sharing of limited resources; providing a central point for communications; coordinating training activities; consistency in recruitment, training and retention; training and/or apprenticeship administration and; remaining current on government regulations and opportunities are just a few examples.

Consortiums have the potential to centralize all administrative functions, particularly concerning apprenticeships, with the exception of signing off on training standards, which remains the responsibility of the individual employer.

Highlights of consortium best practises include:

- (a) Focusing on early connections between industry sectors and youth;
- (b) Advocating and liaising with trainers and educators to arrange co-op placements, internships and job placements for students and graduates;
- (c) Creating a consistent approach to: intake and assessment criteria, skills development and outcomes and expectations;
- (d) Creating a single “point of contact” for individuals who wish to enter the trade/sector;
- (e) Facilitating and administrating the apprenticeship program including contracts, forms, training schedules and regular monitoring;
- (f) Assisting employers with applying for programs associated with credits, subsidies and incentives to develop and train their workforce;
- (g) Assisting employees with navigating the apprenticeship registration process;
- (h) Monitoring the progress of the employee, recommending corrective actions, monitoring for successful outcomes;
- (i) Assisting with tracking and documenting relevant information including: employee progress in skills development; corrective measures; completion of mandated/legislated training;
- (j) Providing an impartial “third party” for employees to voice concerns, particularly for apprentices who feel they are not progressing through the required training standards;
- (k) Identifying and coordinating formal and informal training needs that are career or sector specific based on member feedback;
- (l) Collaborating on training needs which can create the necessary volume to pursue alternative training methods (e.g. e-learning) and flex training (e.g. reducing time away from job responsibilities);
- (m) Sourcing training that is cost effective and responsive to the needs of the members; and
- (n) Providing a unified voice to lobby and advocate on behalf of consortium members to appropriate Ministries, trainers, educators.

A consortium provides a central point of communication for its members to share information that will: optimize resources; improve return on investment for recruitment and training activities; leverage the expertise of the members; provide timely strategies in response to changes in business needs and; ultimately achieve maximum results.

Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC)

Joint Apprenticeship Committee is a term widely used across Canada; however, other terms such as Joint Apprenticeship Council, Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee (JATC) and Local Apprenticeship Committee (LAC) are also used.

JAC's are associated with unions and trade associations and are dedicated to the apprenticeship process. The primary purpose is to meet the industry or sector demand for a highly trained and skilled apprentice who is actively pursuing journeyman status. Typically, a JATC will facilitate the entire process of the apprenticeship by recruiting, selecting, assessing, counseling and overseeing or delivering apprenticeship training.

JAC's exist as a labour management partnership between Union representatives, licensed contractors of the associated trade and, on occasion a non-voting apprentice representative within a defined geographic area. Jointly funded and controlled by industry, JATC's are founded on industry-based "Training Trust Funds" derived from multi-employer collective agreements.

JAC's are legal entities, with numerous trade associations involved in a JATC, and they have their own training facilities which are often recognized as centres of excellence. Being jointly controlled by Unions and contractors/employers enables JATC's to achieve high levels of success as these are the primary parties involved in the supply and demand of qualified tradespeople.

The primary purpose of a JAC is to ensure that the practical trades training is not only aligned with OCOT standards but exceeds standards by coordinating training that is in high demand for the sector or trade. In addition to coordinating and/or providing apprenticeship training, many JATC training facilities focus on skills development for registered journeymen.

Although the JAC is the employer of record (sponsor) for the apprentice, they are not classed as the employer and as such, cannot sign off on the training standards for an apprentice. However, in many cases, they do remain the sponsor on record for a full year after graduation, unless the apprentice has been transferred to a new sponsor.

JAC's focus on maintaining a consistent and readily available talent pool of both apprentices and journeymen, a "built in" mechanism for succession planning. This talent pool is closely and regularly monitored for successful outcomes, as a primary goal of a JAC is to increase both the number of Certificate of Apprenticeship and Certificate of Qualification completions in a community or region.

Members of the JAC meet regularly to discuss apprenticeship issues, identify employer or sector needs and draw on the resources of all members (Union representatives, licensed contractors, apprentices, and journeymen).

Interviewing Apprentice Candidates

- (a) Use behaviour-based interviewing techniques when interviewing apprentice candidates; and
- (b) Verify that the interview questions and information requested on application forms complies with human rights legislation.

Entrance/Aptitude Testing

- (a) Verify that any entrance/aptitude tests utilized are legally defensible; and
- (a) Provide applicants with their entrance/aptitude test results along with a brief summary of identified learning needs and tips on pursuing related skills building.

Apprenticeship Completion

- (a) Track specific data on pass/fail rates for apprentices writing Certificate of Qualification exams (including Interprovincial Red Seal Examinations);
- (b) Provide a range of training policies and supports to promote success in apprenticeship and higher completion rates (e.g., supplemental training, Essential Skills upgrading, tutoring);
- (c) Promote efficiency in apprenticeship administration (e.g., discipline, writing examinations in a timely manner);
- (d) Promote the availability of public policy supports for the trades such as the Federal Government's Apprenticeship Incentive Grant, Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit and Tradespersons Tools Deduction; and
- (e) Develop plans to address the remedial skills needs of apprentices.

Mobility

- (a) Facilitate mobility for apprentices to assist them in obtaining the hours of work needed to successfully complete apprenticeship;
- (b) Promote common sequencing of apprenticeship training across jurisdictions and common core curriculum to remove some of the barriers to mobility faced by apprentices;
- (c) Facilitate opportunities for apprentices to acquire a mix of practical experience that exposes them to all aspects of their trade; and
- (d) Promote dual certification where appropriate as there are more work opportunities available to journeypersons certified in more than one trade.

Foreign Credential Recognition

- (a) Contribute to the development of Foreign Credential Recognition tools and resources; and
- (b) Develop a plan for Prior Learning Assessment as a bridging mechanism to employment for those coming from other countries.

Equity

- (a) Develop strategies to attract, train and retain people who have been traditionally under-represented in the trade such as Aboriginals, women and immigrants;
- (b) Develop an outreach strategy for youth at risk; and
- (c) Integrate diversity awareness into promotional and skills training initiatives to promote a culture of inclusion.

Advisories

Advisories are typically associated with post-secondary institutions who look to establish and maintain partnerships with knowledgeable individuals and employers in the local community. An advisory committee is one of the principal means of ensuring meaningful business and industry participation in the post-secondary program creation and revision process.

Advisory Committees integrate community and educational expertise to identify the local and larger community needs, as well as workplace and professional trends.

The advisory committee structure is comprised of volunteers from the community and could include representatives from industry, business, labour organizations, and professionals related to particular program disciplines. Membership represents a cross-section of the community, including representation from employers/employees, alumni and students. Each committee typically consists of not less than five, and no more than 12 voting members, appointed for an average term of three years.

Advisories endeavor to meet at least twice a year. During periods of program development, change or any other activity required to meet the mandate, committees may meet more frequently and/or strike sub-committees.

The role of an Advisory Committee is to provide recommendations and advise in the following:

- a) Labour market and associated educational/training needs of the community;
- b) Program requirements to meet those needs;
- c) Faculty and administration monitoring of existing programs and in establishing new programs;
- d) Future trends in fields of specialty;
- e) Matters pertaining to the curriculum, facilities, placement, employment and community relations;
- f) Vocational outcomes and employability skills essential in a graduate;
- g) Development of action plans to improve a program's performance based on key performance indicators as per the annual program review;
- h) Feasibility of new post-secondary and post-diploma programs, part-time and customized opportunities for learning;
- i) Establishment of scholarships and bursaries for learners and assist in obtaining these;
- j) Professional issues, emerging legislative issues, employment trends and new developments related to program remaining current and relevant;
- k) Government policy issues that affect graduate employment;
- l) Opportunities for work experience, such as co-operative training, field placement, and clinical practice;
- m) Employment opportunities for graduates and where appropriate, assist in job searches; and
- n) Suitability of College facilities and equipment and where appropriate, identify opportunities to access new equipment, software, etc.

Advisories Best Practises

- a) Develop a direct link between employers and educators. Educators and trainers are well versed in Ministry standards associated with pre-apprenticeship and apprentice training;
- b) Create a “built in” network of employers, particularly important for programming including or requiring co-op placements;
- c) Enable trainers and educators to be more responsive to specialized or unique training requirements of a particular sector based on industry input and guidance;
- d) Create a “built in” mechanism to review intake and assessment criteria;
- e) Create a unified voice to lobby/make appropriate Ministries aware of required changes to: entrance requirements, programming; outcomes and objectives;
- f) Assist trainers and educators with identifying and potentially securing the necessary equipment to maintain high training standards and outcomes;
- g) Provide participating employers with direct and ready access to a talent pool of qualified candidates;
- h) Real time industry input for current and future trends in career options provided early in the trend timeline; and
- i) Pre-meeting coordination to maximize advisory committees time and expertise;

Work Placements

Co-ops, internships, practicums – regardless of the term used, is the process of providing an individual with hands-on experience in a particular field of study. Whether this experience is in the early stages of career exploration (would I enjoy this career), during career training (what are my options if I take this career path), or after graduation (I really need to get my foot in the door), work placements create a strong return on investment.

Co-operative education allows individuals to participate in valuable learning experiences that help prepare them for the next stage of their lives, whether in apprenticeship training, college, community living, university or the workplace. Work placements are a unique opportunity to create a win-win-win relationship between the employer, the training institution and the individual looking to establish a career path.

Benefits to the individual

- Real world experience, in a professional environment;
- Opportunity to “test drive” potential employment opportunities and explore different career paths or options;
- Networking with professionals in the career field, making connections;
- Potential for future employment (foot in the door);
- Experience to include on a resume- increased employability skills;
- Enhanced employment prospects that may lead directly to employment with the same employer;
- Work related references;
- Increases the individual’s technical skills and competencies as it relates to the career path; and
- Improves the knowledge and understanding of a particular sector or career (better informed decisions about future career choices).

Benefits to the employer

- A great recruitment tool for future new hires;
- Opportunity to draw on a temporary and flexible source of talent, particularly for set term projects;
- Placements can bring new ideas to the business;
- Reduce recruitment costs; little initial training is required to convert a placement student into an employee;
- Reduce retention costs; there is a familiarity between the individual and the employer resulting in a lower “risk” of the individual terminating their employment with the company;
- Access to individuals with developed skills related to the career; and
- Develop skills that are important to the future of the industry or sector.

Benefits to the trainer/educator

- A strong work placement can improve the reputation of the educator and can result in improved recruitment, retention and achievement rate among students;
- Raises the profile of the training institution; and
- Increases contact with business and industry – a positive employer experience increases the likelihood they will come back year after year with additional placement vacancies or recruitment needs;

Work Placement Best Practises

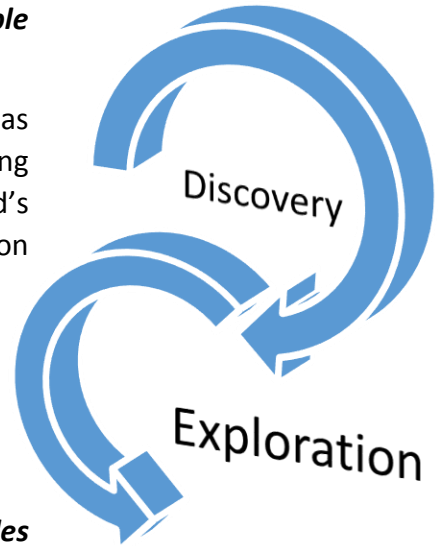
- a) Gain practical work experience in areas that complement personal strengths, interests and educational needs of the individual;
- b) Actively learn as a responsible team member in the “real world”;
- c) Facilitates entry into a workplace or career path;
- d) A model for career exploration, career training and career employment;
- e) An opportunity to confirm career decisions prior to starting post-secondary education;
- f) Establish contacts in the workplace for networking opportunities and gain references for future employment;
- g) Provide the opportunity to practise the skills developed in the classroom;
- h) Create a venue for valuable feedback for employers, individuals and training institutions; and
- i) Flexible and responsive to set term or project-based activities.

Barriers to Increasing the Local Trades & Apprenticeship Labour Pool

Numerous contributing factors to this critical shortage have been identified through local reports, employer forums and surveys:

1. ***A shrinking local labour pool (the actual number of people actively searching for employment):***

- The population growth of Brantford and Brant County has not kept pace with national and provincial rates, according to figures from the 2016 census. In 2016, Brantford's population rose by 4.1% and Brant County's population was up by 3%. The Brantford census metropolitan area, which includes the City and the County had an overall growth rate of 3.8%, which is below the national population growth rate of 5% and the Ontario rate of 4.6%.



2. ***Lack of interest by our youth population in pursuing the trades as a primary career path.***

3. ***Poor perceptions and misinformation about careers in the trades including a general lack of knowledge of the academic, technical and employability skills required to enter and succeed in a trade:***

- Youth, parents, teachers and guidance/employment counselors are often poorly informed about opportunities in the skilled trades, especially regarding working conditions, job satisfaction, salary expectations, and the substantial opportunities for advancement;
- Perceptions of skilled trades are cold, dirty, outdoor, seasonal, boom and bust occupations, which involve repetitive work, low job satisfaction, and little imagination for even less compensation; and
- A lack of awareness of the evolution of the physical demands of skilled trades is also a barrier for underrepresented markets, such as women.

4. ***Training is not always timely and responsive to employer needs:***

- The process to change or develop curriculum, obtain internal and external approvals, promote and secure sufficient critical mass to participate in the training is lengthy and often cost prohibitive;
- The absence of coordinated training needs and activities between business and industry in a competitive environment, often results in higher individual training costs; and
- Trainers and educators often lack the necessary resources to stay abreast of changes in a sector or industry, particularly as it relates to equipment and/or software.



5. A low employer participation rate for apprenticeships in our region:

- In the Grand Erie catchment area there is a low participation rate by employers (36%) in hiring apprentices (WPBGE, 2017); and
- Journeypersons are not always well equipped, or willing, to properly mentor apprentices throughout their apprenticeship which can result in an apprentice not achieving mandatory training standards required by OCOT.

6. Financial constraints coupled with the lack of awareness of available financial supports for both employers and potential apprentices:

- Identified elements include: loss of wages during in-class training, mandatory in-class training may not be available locally which could result in relocation or increased transportation costs; costs of tools and/or equipment and, potential lower rates of pay during early years of apprenticeship.

7. Poor apprenticeship completion rates for some trades:

- Some of the issues identified as contributing to low completion rates have been attributed to the gap that exists between OCOT training standards, College programming and employer's skills requirements; and
- College programming is not always keeping pace with the advances in technology and new processes required by business and industry.

8. Low pass rates for Certification of Qualification (C of Q) exam (52%):

- Apprenticeship completion rates are inconsistent across various trades and trade associations. "Exam pass rates for the period of April – June 2016 show that just 52 percent of 109 apprentices achieved the 70 percent required to receive their journeyperson status." (WPBGE).

9. Navigating the apprenticeship system is challenging for employers and apprentices:

- Applying for a career in the trades is substantially more challenging than completing a college or university application; and
- Employers are finding that: accessing the information to register and participate in apprenticeships is difficult; government websites are challenging to navigate; and employers simply don't know where to go or who to talk to for assistance.



A Canada Wide Labour Shortage

A shortage of skilled trades' workers and certified journeypersons is plaguing the national, provincial and local labour markets.

According to Peter Harris, editor-in-chief of Workopolis "There is an incredible amount of opportunity in the trades industry in Canada right now...Canada faces a shortage of one million tradespeople by 2020, as many people in that field will be retiring.

Of every in-demand industry in Canada, skilled trades' workers are arguably the most sought-out by employers.

talentegg.ca

In October 2017 representatives from Canada's construction and maintenance industry, including owners, contractors, labour associations and government came together at a National Industry Strategy Summit³ to address the impact of close to a quarter of a million construction workers planning their retirement this decade. There was strong agreement that not only attracting but retaining the next generation of skilled trades' workers was a key industry priority.

"We're about to lose a whole generation's worth of experience with the retirement of 21% of Ontario's construction workforce. It's a major exodus, which makes recruiting, hiring and training a priority for the industry, and a real opportunity for those starting or changing careers.

*Rosemary Spark, Executive Director
BuildForce Canada*

It is obvious that we are facing a "demographic deficit". The number of highly qualified trades people who are about to retire, far exceeds the number of new entrants into the various trade professions.

In addition to the projected retirement of baby boomers, the demand for skilled trades' workers is further compounded by the need for qualified and experienced trades' people to meet the demand of federal and provincial investments in major projects.

The newly proposed Canadian Infrastructure Bank (announced November 2016) will see our federal government put up \$35 billion dollars in hopes of attracting at least four to five times that amount from the private sector -- global or national, to be invested in large infrastructure projects across the country.

Further driving the demand for the trades is our diversifying energy landscape as we continue to move forward to a "green energy future". This model is more than just alternative energies - it encompasses the concept of improved efficiencies. As a result, the trades' person who will lead us into the future will need to be well versed in; automated technologies, digital spaces, digitization, and integrated information and communication technologies. These highly trained individuals will need to collaborate with other professionals from a range of disciplines: engineers, architects and environmental scientists.

It is evident that we must act now to make strong investments in training the talent that is going to build, maintain and service our future diversified economy.

³ BuildForce Canada's second National Industry Strategy Summit

The Surging Economy

Canada's big banks are forecasting that Ontario will lead the country in economic growth in 2017. Unemployment sits at its lowest level in 16 years and Ontario's economy grew at double the national average in 2016. The province's corporate tax revenue, jumped a whopping 16.8% in 2016, and 19.6 per cent in 2015.⁴

The City of Brantford is seeing growth in all economic sectors and has achieved steady growth in recent years in industrial, commercial and residential developments.

Brantford was named in the top 10 micro-cities of the future by the Foreign Direct Investment Magazine (2015/2016) in addition to one of the top 10 places in Ontario for real estate investment. The expansion of post-secondary educators in Brantford including Wilfrid Laurier University, Conestoga College and Six Nations Polytechnic is creating an Educational Centre of Excellence which are anticipated to be key catalysts for future investors. Huffington Post (2017) ranked Brantford as one of the five best cities to live based on a combination of employment opportunities and affordable housing.

The County of Brant has placed a key focus on the heavy manufacturing, advanced manufacturing and warehousing/logistics sectors as strategic priorities for their continued economic diversity and growth. The County continues to make major inroads into green energies through Brant Renewable Energy and improving rural accessibility to integrated communication systems through Brant Fibre Optics.

The results of the 2017 EmployerONE survey conducted by the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie further signified our local surging economy. ***"...since 2014, employers have consistently hired more people than anticipated."***

"The Ontario economy has been quite strong over the last couples of years (and) we expect to see another very strong year in 2017."

*Dina Ignjatovic
TD Economics*

For the first nine months of 2017, the City of Brantford had issued 788 building permits valued at \$181 million – a substantial increase from the same period in 2016 when 756 permits were issued for a value of \$106.9 million.

For the first nine months of 2017, the County of Brant has issued 565 building permits valued at \$53.6 million – matching the same value of 2016. However, 2016 realized a 25% increase over 2015.

⁴ CBC News, May 2017

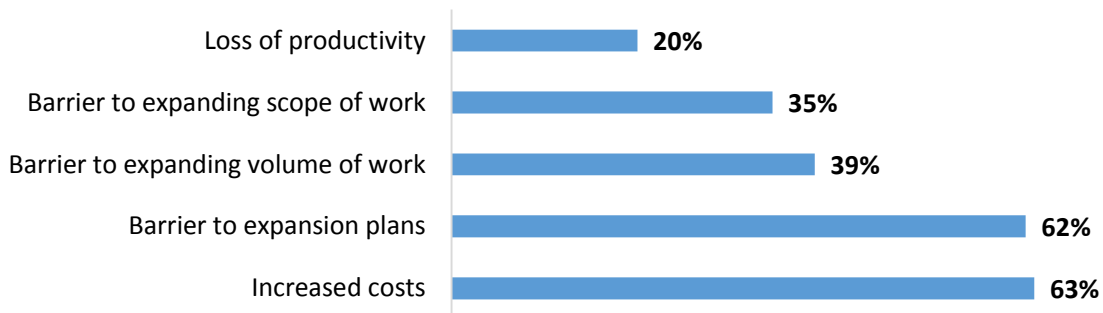
The Local Labour Market

Our local economy is robust and rapidly growing. Businesses are substantially increasing the size of facilities, expanding into new products and markets. New businesses are being attracted to the region. However, there is a dark side to this substantial economic development – the lack of skilled trades’ people to support these growth and expansion plans.

Employers in the Brantford, Brant and Six Nations region indicated that the lack of skilled trades’ people is a major hindrance to their expansion plans and is resulting in substantially increased business costs. These increased costs are a direct result of the need for business and industry to meet production schedules, job requirements and timelines. The two primary factors for these increased costs were identified as overtime for current employees and outsourcing of work to third parties or private contractors at an increased financial rate.

Further, the lack of skilled trades people has resulted in employers being unable to expand their business (expand facilities, add new products or pursue new markets) and an inability to fully maximize their existing resources to full capacity (bid on new contracts) by expanding the volume of work produced.⁵

Negative Impact on Business



Ultimately some employers have indicated a need to relocate to another region if the local labour market is not able to fulfill their needs for new hires.

The challenges created by the lack of a local skilled trades talent pool, coupled with the lack of local and accessible skilled trades’ training prompted a group of community stakeholders including: trainers; secondary and post-secondary educators; all levels of government; area business and industry; trade association representatives; employment support services and; organizations and associations focused on labour force development, to form the **Skilled Trades Alliance**⁶.

⁵ Skilled Trades in Demand for Brantford, Brant & Six Nations: GVES 2016 (www.gves.ca)

⁶ The Skilled Trades Alliance meets bi-monthly and administrative support is provided by the Grand Valley Educational Society. For more information please contact the GVES (519.754.0817 or gves@bellnet.ca)