

University of Southern Maine

THINKING MATTERS

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Title of Project: Leading Development of Skilled Workers: Transforming Unskilled Labor to Skilled Craft Labor in the Pulp and Paper Manufacturing Industry

Abstract: The demand for entry level skilled trades workers in the pulp and paper industry has far outnumbered the supply of workers currently available in the United States. Many pulp and paper manufactures have dozens or even hundreds of unfilled high paying jobs with great benefits currently available. Concurrently to this, an available workforce of unskilled workers with little to no formal technical training remains available. These unskilled workers are frequently working in lower wage jobs with poor benefits that offer very little opportunity for advancement. This research explores and attempts to identify what is the most effective process that can be used to develop unskilled workers into entry level skilled trades workers in the pulp and paper industry. Grounded Theory qualitative research methods were utilized for this research. Expert opinions and experiences were gathered from nine seasoned individuals with maintenance leadership experience in the pulp and paper industry by conducting a series of interview questions. The data collected from the interviews were summarized into 21 different main topics of importance. These topics were further grouped into six significant themes that will help to build an effective and efficient process for skilled worker development. The potential benefits from this research and the resulting conclusions are two-fold. First, the potential of filling the employment gap for organizations, which will allow them to continue to operate profitably and be a strong economic force in communities. Second, individuals in unskilled jobs can potentially be given the opportunity for career advancement and improved financial stability.

Project involved interaction with: People

Discipline(s): Leadership Studies

Presentation Type: Poster Presentation

Presentation setup needs:

Primary Institution: University of Southern Maine

Undergraduate or Graduate: Graduate

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