

CARS NEWS

Where people, training and technology meet

Fall Issue, November 2008

ESSENTIAL SKILLS ARE GAINING TRACTION

CARS is currently into the second phase of a comprehensive, nationwide project that ultimately aims at putting industry professionals on a surer footing when it comes to knowledge acquisition and professional development. CARS is doing so by taking a close look at the relative importance of nine essential skills to the day-to-day competence of industry professionals in a variety of occupations.

In the Fall of 2007 and Spring of 2008, CARS conducted a series of workshops for audiences ranging from high school educators to college instructors from as far away as Nova Scotia Community College in the east to Vancouver Community College in the west. Over 200 participants honed their skills in identifying the 9 Essential Skills and explored the commonalities and differences in Essential Skills Profiles for automotive occupations. Educators increased their comfort level with Essential Skills concepts to the point of being able to intentionally integrate the relative level of complexity of tasks within a nationally accepted scale assigned to each of the nine skills.

(continued on page 2)



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2010 AND BEYOND

NEW
industry study
looks into
upcoming challenges
and opportunities
for employers
and employees



CARS is updating an extensive study looking at the human resource (HR) and training needs of industry employers and employees in the motive power repair and service industry. The 2005 report, "The Road Ahead", identified "change" as the biggest and most consistent 'issue' facing the Canadian automotive repair and service sector, as well as the source of its biggest opportunities. In the three short years since then, the industry has entered a period of breakneck technological evolution which has had, and will continue to have, a significant impact on all those involved in any aspect of vehicle maintenance and repair.

An advisory committee composed of industry representatives from across Canada is guiding the research. **What will be explored?**

- Labour market trends
- Training and development
- Retention and recruitment
- Working conditions
- Challenges and opportunities around skills and knowledge acquisition
- Remuneration
- Differences across the various regions of Canada

To complement the labour market understanding, CARS is also undertaking research around new technologies to determine:

- the critical technologies currently impacting the workforce and those to be introduced
- the major barriers and constraints related to technology
- the critical skills needed now and in the next few years to work with new technologies.

There will be excellent opportunities over the winter months for you to let us know what your individual HR and training challenges are, so that we can work with you on initiatives that will turn those challenges into opportunities to improve your job satisfaction and bottom line.

Your input to the research, through survey completions and participation in focus groups is very important and appreciated.

Stay tuned to the CARS website (www.cars-council.ca) for more information as we proceed with this important study. The final report will become available in Fall 2009 and will provide the industry with current labour market information that can be used for your own HR planning.



Canadian Automotive
Repair and Service

Service d'entretien et de
réparation automobiles du Canada

www.cars-council.ca

The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council is Canada's leader in training development for the motive power repair and service industry, one of the largest and most important components of the Canadian labour market.

As a national, not-for-profit sector council, CARS undertakes research and activities to support the professional development needs of this exciting industry.



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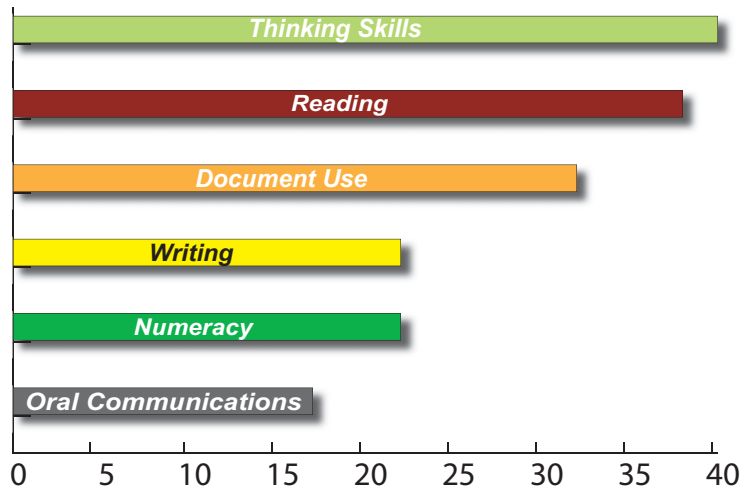
Funded by
the Government of Canada's
Sector Council Program.

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Essential Skills Are Gaining Traction (continued from page one)

The greatest challenge

During this initial round of workshops, participants were asked to identify which Essential Skill poses the greatest challenge for their respective learners. The graph below clearly captures the belief expressed by respondents that thinking skills posed the greatest challenges for learners, and that both thinking skills and oral communications merited benchmarking in the way that reading, document and numeracy had been assessed previously.



(Out of a total of 45 instructors surveyed, 40 participants rated thinking skills as the greatest challenge)

First ever benchmarking of oral communications and thinking skills

CARS took up the challenge and contracted the renowned TOWES Department at Bow Valley College to conduct a field study to benchmark oral communications and thinking skills among students, apprentices and workers in the motive power repair and service sector. Researchers met with strong support from private business and colleges alike, solid representation from both the mechanical and collision repair side of the industry as well as positive feedback from participants.

Results of the benchmark assessments are being eagerly awaited, not only by the industry and post secondary motive power instructors, but also by others who have an interest in developing tools that advance professional development. Look for details on the Essential Skills findings in the winter edition of CARS News.

For more information on the status of Essential Skills in our sector and to access CARS Essential Skills resource materials, please contact Ed Nasello at ednasello@cars-council.ca or call **905-709-0219**.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE BENEFITS CONSUMERS, SHOPS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

ecoEnergy trains Service Personnel in Consumer Education

"Protecting our environment should be everyone's concern," says CARS Executive Director Jennifer Steeves, "and coupled with the high cost of fuel today, CARS new ecoEnergy project could not be more timely or topical." The new project Steeves is referring to, is an ambitious and very timely training program designed to increase consumer satisfaction and shop profitability.

Geared to service department personnel, the training will provide guidance on how to better advise customers on the multiple benefits of regular preventative maintenance, such as reducing their vehicle maintenance costs, reduced fuel consumption, and harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

The ecoEnergy educational campaign, which CARS developed with the support of industry leaders and financial backing from the Office of Energy Efficiency of Natural Resources Canada, will enable automotive service advisors and managers to effectively increase customer awareness of the benefits of proper vehicle maintenance and good driving practices that reduce BOTH fuel consumption and harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Point of purchase promotion items such as posters, fuel saving tip flyers and brochures will be available at service counters across Canada in addition to informative articles in industry trade publications and on the CARS website.

Phil Myers was one of the first industry stakeholders to sign on to the project. "Canadian Tire has long promoted the importance of regular maintenance," noted Myers, "and the CARS ecoENERGY project will give our front line service people the tools and the information to promote this important message to our customers."

To find out more, contact CARS at askus@cars-council.ca




INDUSTRY ADDS MEANING TO EVERYDAY LEARNING IN HIGH SCHOOLS




Using as simple a thing as a wiper blade, CARS is hoping to infuse more workday realities into high school classrooms and help educators make learning materials more relevant for their students.

Industries Connected:

**Supply Chain
to
Automotive
Repair and Service**

Case Study: The Wiper Blade
*An outline of the occupations and skills involved for the
installation of a windshield wiper blade*



In order to do this, CARS is exploring options with various industry and educational partners. One of these options is a pilot project which involves staff and students Lakeshore Collegiate Institute, a Toronto high school, the Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council, CARS and local businesses. To ensure the ongoing viability of engaging industry with education, CARS and the Supply Chain Sector Council are trying to build and nurture a relationship between Lakeshore and local industry, both repair and service and supply chain, starting with the establishment of a local education-industry committee made up of school staff and representatives from local businesses.

Once industry education connections have been established, the two sector councils plan to facilitate industry tours for teaching staff that will serve as an introduction to career options in the two industries by highlighting just the occupations involved in the mundane task of replacing a wiper blade. The scenario will unfold something like this. A customer brings a vehicle in for regular service. He needs to have his wiper blades replaced. We then discover a range of occupations related to motive power and the supply chain by tracking the arrival of a replacement wiper blade via all the people who are involved - the technician who services the vehicle, the service advisor, the parts person, and the pick and pack person at the warehouse.

Teachers taking the proposed tours will be supplied with occupational information and Essential Skills profiles for each of the occupations in this particular 'supply chain' so they gain a better understanding of how each worker uses Essential Skills, how two industries intersect, and how they can relate concrete examples of numeracy, reading, document use, etc. to their classroom delivery.

In order to further enrich what teachers take away from industry visits, the sector councils have put forward suggestions for Essential Skills workshops and invitations to attend local industry meetings.

Trans-Canada News

This section of CARS News highlights the activities of other champions of the motive power industry from across Canada. To have your success stories or events featured in the Trans Canada News section, please submit your articles and photos to dagmar@carscouncil.ca.



**Automotive
Sector Council
of Nova Scotia**

The Future of Transmission Technicians in Nova Scotia

For over 25 years, the Transmission Technician in Nova Scotia has been classified as a sub-trade of the Automotive Service Technician (AST). Currently, the Automotive Service Technician sub-trades are being reviewed and updated to meet industry needs.

Through the facilitation and leadership of the NS Automotive Sector Council, the Transmission Review Committee is working to engage industry to better understand the economic and labour needs for the next five to ten years.

The study will determine several things:

- the current number of employed transmission technicians
- future hiring needs
- economic and labour supply and demand
- the preferred certification pathway for new transmission apprentices.

Business owners and managers will have the opportunity to determine if the Transmission Technician occupation should be:

- a) an independent, certified trade with provincial training,
- b) remain a sub-trade of the AST trade, with certification only (status quo), or
- c) remain as a sub-trade with enhanced provincial training and certification.

Based on the results of regional consultations, interviews and a formal labour market survey, the Review Committee will put forth a recommendation to the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board, anticipated for January 2009.

For more information, contact Corrie Robley, Executive Director of the Automotive Sector Council of Nova Scotia at:

AutoHR@eastlink.ca

A strong business case for apprenticeship

Employers accrue a benefit, on average, of \$1.38 for every \$1 invested in training an apprentice. The majority of Canadian employers are unaware that apprenticeship training can improve their bottom line this way. To address this lack of awareness and to raise the overall participation in apprenticeship training in Canada, the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) recently conducted a series of employer engagement forums across Canada.

The following are some of the highlights of what employers had to say about apprenticeship training once they had attended a CAF forum:

- 68.9% agree that an apprentice's productive value exceeds the training cost by the end of the second year or earlier.
- 70% believe that hiring apprentices ensures that an organization has skilled labour and a lower turnover rate.
- 68.9% concur that 'homegrown' journeypersons are more productive to an externally trained journeyperson
- By the end of the forum 93.4% said that after attending the event they were further convinced that there was a business case for apprenticeship.

For further details on how employers from all industries feel about the business case for apprenticeship training, look for the *Strategies to Increase Employer Participation in Apprenticeship Training in Canada: A summary of discussion results with employers from across Canada* Report on the CAF website at:

http://www.caf-fca.org/en/report/CAF_EmplEngage_E5.pdf

