

The Challenge

- A significant portion of the utility work force are retiring or eligible to retire
- The loss of critical knowledge and the inability to find replacements with utility- specific skills are the two biggest challenges utilities face because of the aging work force.
- Training budgets are being trimmed with the concept – do more with less.
- Technical jobs are being restructured requiring new knowledge and skills.

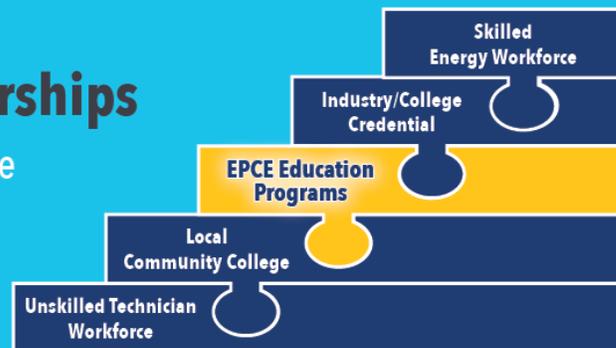
The Solution

By initiating a Community College Blended Learning Partnership model, leveraging online industry technical courses through EPCE’s education partner Bismarck State College at local employer-based community colleges, and decreasing company delivered training in the first two-years of a four-year apprenticeship, companies can receive a cost savings through providing less instructor and apprentice classroom hours.

Community College Blended Learning Partnership model can save an energy company up \$250,000 for training future employees over a two-year period.

Community College Partnerships

Leverage EPCE to Create a Comprehensive Community College Partnership



The Community College Blended Learning Partnership Model Features

- A partnership enabled the local Community College system to provide academic (general education) courses and Bismarck State College to provide industry built online electric power technology courses.
- Students enroll in the degree program at local community colleges.
- Upon completion, students earn an Associate’s degree in Technology Studies, awarded from their local community college.
- Students also gain valuable work experience through hands-on training at the company-training center. Students are required to participate in the field internships, working during the summer and winter breaks and are guaranteed an interview if positions are available.

The Benefits

- Since the students attending the community college program have not been hired by the company, **the apprentice training cost is decreased.** The students attending the college program carry the entire tuition cost for the community college program.
- The community college program also **decreases instructor classroom cost and any miscellaneous cost** associated with materials, supplies, travel, meals, textbooks, lab supplies and administrative oversight and tracking.
- **Local community colleges benefit from immediate access to high-quality online industry-specific technical curriculum sponsored by EPCE,** the technical course content is built by the industry, for the industry.
- Future employee development is ensured by **the students completing their Associate's degree** while completing all the company required courses
- **An increase in the number of two-year college graduates at the company,** more freedom for students to review the material on their own time due to the flexibility of the online program. Students are committed to the community college program recognizing that the successful completion of the 2-year program virtually guarantees them an employment interview.
- **Membership in EPCE provides immediate access to online curriculum built by industry subject matter experts** and taught by content expert instructors with hand-on experience in the energy industry. The online Electric Power Technology program curriculum builds a core set of skills, competencies and aligns with the companies apprentice programs.
- The **employer does not carry the burden of supporting the community college program individually;** partnering with EPCE's and utilizing its online education provides the flexibility to support as many or as few students per your workforce development/pipeline plan.
- **The cost for the community college program is minimal.** These results are significant and make a strong management case.

For questions, please contact Christine Carpenter, director of EPCE, at info@epceonline.org

Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE) is a unique partnership of electric power utilities, national and regional industry associations, contractors, labor and industry-related organizations working together to advance online education and training in the electric power industry.

The EPCE initiative is a collaborative approach to developing online programs and innovative models for workforce development using industry-driven, online curricula.

Visit www.epceonline.org for more information.