

Certification Meeting  
6/14/07  
St. Louis

Meeting background: Keith Campbell- supporting the packaging industry.

**Introductions**

***Lester White***- Weaver Popcorn. He works for small manufacturing company and is looking for a certificate that is recognizable by the manufacturing & packaging industry similar to the Electrical Journeyman card. His company has a certification process that all operators must go through. He wants an accredited program that is standardized across the nation.

***Pearly Cunningham***- CCAC has an AAS degree (Integrated Systems Engineering Technology) that is articulated with a BS degree w/ California University (BS degree is Industrial Technology), and is available online. He is working on a 2+2+2 program. He made the comment that some of the companies he's dealt with really like the NCIST brochure with all the topic areas. He expressed the need for a national certification that has a basic skill set- certificate or AAS degree. He explained that we really need something at that lower level.

***Chad Cuaette***- automation program- mechatronics- his program does a lot of incumbent worker training.

***Jim Gilmore***-OCC, he talked about their AAS Degree. He indicated that they recently had their first two graduates of the new AAS Degree.

***Maria Ferrante***- PMMI, She said they are interested in something that says people are qualified to work in the packaging industry.

***Dan Kocher***- ECC, his program offers 3 certificates. They are graduating the first group of AAS degree students soon. He noted some name recognition problems and also said he's having problems getting new people into the program. He also explained that industry is more interested in the hydraulics and pneumatics on a non-credit basis.

***Nancy Cobb***- she has worked with Nabisco and Kraft and has served on several advisory boards. She explained that companies are really looking for partnerships to do apprenticeship programs. She emphasized practical partnerships such as with unions. She also said that companies want to develop their own people, so it makes sense to hire people with the basic skills that the individual companies can build upon. She noted a trend of machine operators doing a lot of the maintenance work. Some companies she has worked with went to the military to hire workers because they are disciplined and trainable. She has also worked with CAT to get young kids interested in manufacturing.

She indicated that the real stumbling block for recruiting young people is the parents and their perception of manufacturing.

**Vernon Trevathan**- ISA. He represents an individual organization in the process industry. He said they have been more successful at the engineering level, and he makes a big distinction between a certificate and a certification.

- Certificate- complete X number of courses and you receive a certificate
- Certification – involves more requirements and there's a focused exam at the end. A certification requires experience too. There is typically 100 hours of study time involved in the preparation for the focused exam. A new certification will cost about 1 million to develop. NOCA is the organization that will indicate if they have followed the proper steps to certify.

This is what his group is doing now:

- Certified Controls Technician- makes a small profit, well-respected, how to do things with automation (PLCs) – There are 1,000's of holders of this certificate.
- Certified Automation Professional- very well-respected, everyone at the engineering level knows about it, but not everyone wants to spend the time studying that is needed to pass this certification. There are about 200,000 Automated Engineers in the US that are candidates for this certification.
- Certified Industrial Maintenance Mechanic- This certification is just getting off the ground. It was primarily requested by manufacturers in LA & TX, but the effect of Katrina on these two states has slowed down the progression of this certification taking off. They are still in the process of writing questions for the exam. Merging the automation techs and maintenance techs, workforce development is a major thrust now; plants are saying that they are having trouble finding people. Needs an automation engineering degree.

Automation Federation- several groups working on automation, an umbrella, organizations keep their identity while utilizing the administrative resources, the educational initiatives have been pushed back, OPW (not sure if I got that right) could be a potential partner.

Vernon stated it is difficult to establish multi-level certification.

**Dave Ross**- CPCC, Dave noted a demand for assessment and certification.

**Scott Sheely**- Lancaster WIB, incumbent worker training 5-6 yrs ago, the focus shifted to employers being the customers. Scott noted the need to organize companies together in common industries to see how to share training. There are 90 industry partnerships, food packing, metals, plastics, healthcare (each with multiple companies), etc... all companies said they need maintenance training. Scott wants to develop a pipeline and use the same curriculum for all client groups.

**John Devere**- RACC, former high school teacher, worked for chemical companies, built training center not for credit programs but for industry level training. Keith Campbell was their subject matter expert for the AAS degree. The 200-hours can be converted to 9

credit hours that can be applied towards a degree. Serves a 10-county area. They got 2 million for a CBJTG grant.

***Bruce Larson***- Goodman Packaging Equipment, Waukegan. He chairs the workforce partnership with PMMI. He is also trying to figure out how to bring in young people to manufacturing.

### **General Notes**

Small to medium sized packagers found this training good.

We need a certification that starts at the operator level and moves up to other levels. 23,000 emails were sent to packagers in the US and over 200+ responders indicated the following: 65% of packagers would like their maintenance staff to be multi-skilled. The packaging industry identified the most important credential as the AAS degree.

CCAC- students get 12 credits for the 200-hour completion, require them to do some writing, the 200-hour curriculum is lacking that. They are working on internet-based incumbent worker training.

Chad- center for automation and motor control. Fluid power program & manufacturing engineering technology degree. 72-credit degrees. Teaches a lot surrounding the mechatronics concepts. IE611 training- his college is the national center (of excellence) for this training. Ramp center (remote automation .....) hands-on simulated training. Hybrid training- some in the lab and some over the internet. Automated control certificate (in the process of development). They received a grant from Society of Manufacturing Engineers & Manufacturing Education plant. They build trainers and sent them out to 6 high schools- initially looking to upskill instructors for professional training. The high school really likes it and wants to incorporate it into junior & senior classes. The college students will watch over the IP and help the high school students do troubleshooting. They also applied for a NSF project grant. They built their own modules and curriculum. They built trainers for Hershey too.

Keith has talked to Amatrol about incorporating international standards in their training equipment.

Keith indicated that they had asked manufacturers about job shadowing, and received a resounding “no” because of liability/insurance/confidentiality.

Dan Kocher – ECC had a technical career night that was attended by 90 potential students. The plant managers spoke to the kids and changed a lot of minds. Ninety kids (plus their parents) attended the career night and 50 actually signed up for the program.

Dave Ross - wants to do satellite sites, regional center, also going to offer a track for ESL students.

John- has 50 e-learners that are now coming to campus to begin the hands-on assessment. Labs are staffed by topics. So students can take anything offered in that lab. Incumbent worker training is \$8,400 and the online training is \$6,000.

They sustained the program with a local company that signed a 3-yr contract to be an exclusive training provider. John says that manufacturers really want/need flexibility. The training needs to be accessible, day, evening and Saturdays.

Pearley said that one option is to certify the instructor. The instructor and institution must be certified in order to grant a certification to the student (that the student is competent in those skills). Pearley doesn't think that a paper test will work for this demographic.

Lester – 8% increase in productivity by cross-training their operators. Says that in order to get some state funding – need a nationally recognized “certificate” or certification.

Maria said that they really want to certify a certificate. She said they spend about \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year on marketing their programs.

#### NOCA- NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF CERTIFYING AUTHORITIES

The proposed certification is targeting the hybrid industries.

Vernon: Certifications are typically renewable every 2-3 years. Usually developed by consultants – pay for their travel, validating questions, surveys, marketing.

Maria indicated that they have tons of data related to packaging and how they need a skilled workforce to compete.

PMMI would be willing to send survey/communication to all their 500+ members if needed.

As a product of this meeting, a common goal emerged: We need a “portable skills set” that is nationally recognized.