

Internships: A Strategy to Increase Local Pool of Skilled Trades Job Candidates

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Background & Challenges

EBMUD is experiencing a silver tsunami of retirements and even more are expected over the next 5 years.

STAFFING CHALLENGES:

- **Candidates with journey-level skills are predominately from the baby boomer generation.**
- **Last two generations of high school students have not had option of Voc Ed classes.**
- **Local military bases & NUMI plant closed.**
- **EBMUD's in-house Trades Training Program costs were prohibitive.**

Classification	5-Year Retirement Eligibility
Instrument Technician	47%
Wastewater Plant Operator	46%
Electrical Technician	41%
Water Treatment Plant Operators	39%
Mechanic/Machinist	37%

Components of intern strategy

Develop partnerships with local colleges to support & strengthen training programs.

Organize EBMUD Resources: Hiring Mgrs, HRD & Legal.



- **Revamp in-house TTP to allow hiring @ Trainee II level.**
- **Identify competencies needed.**
- **Gain department commitment to hire trainees.**
- **Budget & schedule internships and trainee exam.**
- **Contract with College Foundations & Coop Ed/Work Experience programs to pay intern stipend & cover workers comp insurance.**

Components of Internship

Student Outreach

- Open to graduates of targeted training programs
- May extend candidate pool: Diversity and/or quantity of candidates

Ex. PG&E's "Intro to Utilities for Women" training program



Internship

- Intern Checklist defined by SMEs
- Intern orientation
- Safety Training & Personal Protective Equipment
- Rotation between Water & Wastewater work sites

Keys to Success

EMPLOYERS

- **Anticipate hiring opportunities over several years**
- **Intern & Trainee competency standards defined by SMEs**
- **SMEs share their time & expertise with college faculty & students**
- **Visit college, donate lab equipment, provide tours**
- **Administrator: Strategize & implement plan with colleges & hiring mgrs**

Keys to Success

COLLEGES

- **Willing to learn & respond to employer's needs – visit employer worksites**
- **Ability to modify curriculum to address employer's competency needs**
- **Ability to administer internships in flexible manner**
- **Ability to pay intern stipends and provide liability coverage**

Keys to Success

STUDENTS

- **Attain competencies required for internship and trainee employment**
- **Willing to get hands dirty**
- **Take initiative to learn: “Can I try it?”**

What not to do

- **Don't assume college training curriculum will prepare students for your jobs.**

Involve your SMEs: curriculum review, tour of college lab, meetings with faculty and BACCC.

- **Limit internship** to “shadowing” or hands-off experience.
- **Leave intern's learning experience to chance** – no structured training plan.
- **Pay the interns late!**

Accomplishments/Successes

**Fall 2012: Five Laney College
IMMM Interns**

**Spring 2013 Trainee Exam: 6:9
finalists were IMMM grads**



**Summer 2013: 3 trainee hires -
All were IMMM grads**