

Apprenticeship Training - Industry Briefing February 26, 2014

Top 3 Priorities for the Special Operating Agency

Priority 1: Improve the Intake Process

- We need to provide more practical information about the realities of a selected trade to enable prospective students and apprentices to make better decisions before entering a program
- Improve the definition and communication of entry requirements and develop a process to find the best fit for potential students and apprentices industry and employers. Ensure prospective students have the ability to meet the requirements.
- P-12 programs have to be reviewed in order to better integrate and align them with apprenticeship.
- Re-engage school guidance counsellors to clarify the prerequisites for programs and consider education sessions for parents.
- Leverage “hands on” opportunities to allow students to “experience” some of the aspects of a given trade prior to pursuing a program.
- To support inclusiveness and diversity, information must be given to targeted audiences such as Women’s Groups, the Aboriginal Community, The Black Business Initiative, for example, and firm targets and goals established to measure the desired change in the participation of underrepresented groups in the apprenticeship program.

Priority 2: Revisit the Training Framework

- Take an integrated approach to training; industry needs more input into NSCC programming and consideration must be given to private institutions and manufacturers’ training programs to make the programs truly flexible to both employers and apprentices.
- Consider more flexible options for training across multiple employers to address challenges in rural areas.
- An effort should be made to shorten the duration of training programs and make them more responsive to new or changing industry requirements.
- Consider a 6 or 8 week direct entry pre-training program instead of a long pre-apprenticeship program.
- Explore a “Fit to Post” approach to encourage employers to hire inexperienced workers. If students are job ready, this may enable 1st and 2nd year apprentices to find work more quickly.
- Address the funding challenge of the Employment Insurance program and provide students with information regarding alternate sources of funding to supplement the “waiting” period associated with the EI Program, ie. Student Loans
- Explore having Co-op programs that last all year to encourage employers to hire students full time.

Priority 3: Improve Business Supports for Industry Involvement and Employer Engagement

- More one-on-one involvement between employers and training officers.
- Consider whether training officers should be specialized in a certain trade to improve their ability to build strong relationships with industry representatives.
- Improved HR Supports in specified industries, similar to what the NS Boat Builders Association is providing for its members, as business owners are responsible for the day-to-day operations and most do not have a full time HR department.
- Develop an online portal that the employers can log in to in order to help them manage their registered apprentices (ie, the apprentices' hours, technical training requirements, etc.).

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