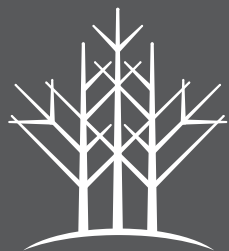


# WMC Summary of Programs and Service



**WMC CFB**

Wood Manufacturing Council  
Conseil des fabricants de bois

# Introduction

The Wood Manufacturing Council is a non-profit corporation that works to bring together stakeholders in advanced wood processing. Our mandate is to plan, develop and implement human resources strategies that support the long-term growth and competitiveness of Canada's advanced wood products manufacturing industry and meet the developmental needs of its workforce. We have developed this set of resources to help our partners in the industry address key issues such as the shortage of skilled workers and the need for national standards for worker competencies. We trust you find them useful as you work to enhance your workforce and increase your business opportunities.



## TRAINING TO DEVELOP THE NEXT GENERATION OF SUPERVISORS AND MANAGEMENT

WMC Management Skills Training provides on-line learning modules specifically developed for business managers and owners of value-added wood products companies. These **custom-developed modules** include numerous case studies and industry examples and are designed to **upgrade the managerial skills** of existing managers, entrepreneurs, supervisors and management-track employees. The modules focus on the following nine areas:

- Production Planning
- Factory Layout and Equipment Justification
- Quality Management and Control
- Supply Chain Management
- Business Finance and Investment Evaluation
- Safety and Human Resources Management
- Sales and Marketing
- New Product Development
- Marketing Green Products

Developed in response to the need to address the **sector's management capacity in both the short and long term**, the management skills training program is well-suited to a variety of audiences, including:

- Industry entrepreneurs who have established and grown their businesses based on their technical knowledge but now need to learn about and

implement various management systems in order to delegate responsibilities and focus on business growth

- Employees in management track or supervisory track roles, employees who need to better understand specific functions within their company in order to do their own jobs more efficiently (such as sales people who need to understand how production decisions are made and vice versa)
- Individuals from non-wood products backgrounds who are joining the sector.

## CUSTOMIZED ONLINE LEARNING IDEAL FOR BUSY INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

Participants can enrol in individual online courses available through the Centre for Advanced Wood Processing at the University of British Columbia to **improve their skills and knowledge** in a particular area. Each module involves approximately 35 – 45 hours of study over a six to eight week period. Also available is the **WMC Management Certificate** which involves completing any six of the modules as well as a final project. Each module is offered at least twice a year, and learners move through each course together, interacting and sharing information and experiences.



## WORKING TOGETHER TO RECRUIT AND DEVELOP EFFECTIVE ENTRY LEVEL WORKERS

Throughout our industry, we share a desire to **attract workers who have strong potential**, a willingness to learn and an interest in a long-term career. Many advanced wood manufacturing companies are interested in **broadening their reach** and looking at **previously untapped or non-traditional sources of labour** among the general population which would help to expand the pool of available workers and address some of our collective labour shortages.

While initial efforts to attract non-traditional employees were focused on equity groups to help our industry develop a more diverse workforce, the WERC program now provides **career opportunities for new Canadians and workers with basic skills**. WERC is also offered to a broader audience with programs available for disadvantaged youth, women in non-traditional trades and indigenous populations. Interest in these programs is growing each year.

If you have interest in seeing a new recruitment program targeted at a specific group, **WMC can help**. We have expertise in:

- Project fundraising
- Recruitment and assessment
- Project management
- Securing partner organization(s)

- Hiring shop instructors and securing facilities
- Hiring ES and safety training providers
- Coordinating job placements
- Supporting employment
- Follow-up, project completion and assessment

We can work with all stakeholders to help with the recruitment and training process, provide supports and interventions, fulfill any government reporting requirements and more.

## COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR SUCCESS

WERC is an **effective pre-employment training curriculum** that develops entry level workers. It begins with an initial intake assessment to measure the suitability of program applicants and to assess skills they already possess. Participants who are selected for the program undergo industry-specific 'Essential Skills training' which includes practical, hands-on components. In addition, they receive relevant safety training, woodshop training and introduction to machinery, career counselling and a multi-week work placement with employers who are encouraged to hire full-time at the conclusion of the work placement. **WERC is the ideal program** to help any organization identify, train and develop their workforce.





## SUPPORTING HIGH SCHOOL WOODWORKING PROGRAMS IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA

WoodLINKS was created with the objective of developing a certification program which would facilitate collaboration with high schools **to train more skilled entry level workers** for the wood industry. Another key objective of the program is to **engage students interested in hands-on educational** pathways including the trades. WoodLINKS encourages students to consider entering woodworking careers (either directly or through further education) and to enter into the sector workforce after they graduate from high school.

WoodLINKS was developed in the early 1990s as a partnership between industry and high school educators in BC. WMC took ownership of the program in 2006 and since that time, has undertaken several WoodLINKS-related initiatives, including an initial project to revamp the core curriculum and create the sub-sector modules. The core curriculum contains the fundamentals for entry-level employment in woodworking such as fundamental woodworking, safety, essential skills and technical skills. A major component of the course focuses on work readiness skills, core wood manufacturing skills and career exploration. Sub-sector modules allow schools to tailor their program to the local industry. The sub-sector module is a project in one of ten product-specific areas, such as cabinets and millwork, windows and doors, fine woodworking, or manufactured housing.

The WoodLINKS material can be aligned with the ministry-approved curriculum in most provinces. The program outlines the entry-level skills and knowledge students need to successfully pursue a career in wood manufacturing. It also provides teachers with the necessary, proven resources and assessment tools to ensure their students start out on the right path. WoodLINKS-certified graduates are equipped to either enter the workforce directly, enter a post-secondary woodworking program, or start an apprenticeship.

## PROVIDING RESOURCES TO DEVELOP THE FUTURE GENERATION OF SKILLED WORKERS

A **valued partnership between education and industry**, WoodLINKS provides an industry-educator developed high school curriculum that leads to woodworking certification. **WoodLINKS graduates are highly sought after** in the industry, and have the passion and drive to be immensely successful in their careers.



## ADVANCING WOMEN'S CAREERS IN THE INDUSTRY

Labour market research has proven that women are an untapped human resource in our industry, both as workers and as role models. This program is designed to **promote the advancement and retention of women** through two distinct recruitment streams. The first targets women who have recently completed or are in the process of completing post-secondary studies in wood processing and related courses. The second stream is geared towards women currently working in production positions in the woodworking industry. The ultimate goal is to have the mentorship program available to everyone in the industry (production and non-production employees), however, the initial phase of the program concentrates on production workers. Mentorship of women by women will create a community with shared goals and objectives, including combatting common barriers and challenges.

Opportunities for long and satisfying careers exist for women and we want them to stay in our industry and to flourish. However, we understand at times women may feel challenged, isolated or simply in need of guidance and counsel from women who have experienced similar career paths. This is often true in, but not limited to, the first year or two of employment. By sharing life and work experience, a mentor can help mentees navigate challenging circumstances or they can simply provide such things as inspiration, knowledge, insight, guidance, support or encouragement.

Mentorship is a proven, beneficial relationship that supports learning, development and advancement. Mentor-mentee relationships are confidential and the term of the formal mentorship program is one year, yet the relationship could last a lifetime. Many of the initial mentors are from the woodworking sector, but could also come from other sectors (skilled trades, other manufacturing etc.). They will be company and tradespeople, educators and association managers who can contribute with experiences and knowledge that can provide guidance, support and encouragement to mentees.

### A VALUED RECRUITING TOOL FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

We anticipate that this program will initially encourage more women to consider **long-term careers** in our industry. Eventually, it is hoped that strong mentorship will also prove a valuable recruiting tool to attract more women to enter the industry. We can all work together to create a strong community of women in woodworking while influencing positive change in our industry.



# Women's Mentorship Program

## HELPING BUILD INTERNATIONAL CAPACITY WITH WORLD-CLASS TRADE TRAINING

The Going Global online training program has been custom-designed to help businesses in our sector expand their markets which will, in turn, **drive growth and increase profits**. With practical modules on how to develop international trade skills and deliver to international markets, the Going Global program is a comprehensive package that covers the **key pillars of successful exporting**.

Originally developed after studies showed that opportunities to increase marketing knowledge within the industry would be beneficial, the Going Global program is helping to **enhance the Canadian sector's marketing strength and profitability**. One of the key benefits of this training is that it is offered online, with material accessible anytime and from any location.

The program delivers high-impact content from top experts, and puts extensive backup materials at the fingertips of participants. These useful materials educate business owners and managers on how to successfully expand their marketing to reach international clients, and avoid pitfalls along the way. The program consists of four modules:

- Global supply chain management and importing
- International trade research and marketing
- International trade finance
- Cultural aspects of international trade

## GOING GLOBAL HELPS COMPANIES GROW WITH CONFIDENCE

With instruction from a panel of international trade experts, the Going Global program also provides extensive backup materials to further the learning process. Companies whose staff participate in the Going Global training will be **well-positioned to enter the world of international trade and export**, enabling them to grow with confidence.



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# Going Global (International Trade Training)





## COMPREHENSIVE LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION HELPS WITH HR PLANNING

Employers, educators and other stakeholders in the advanced wood manufacturing industry now have a **valuable tool** in the form of the WMC's Labour Market Information (LMI) study. It provides **credible research** on many aspects of our sector's labour-related issues including sector demographics, HR issues and challenges, skills gaps, employment forecasts and more. These studies enable a deeper understanding of the **current and future outlook of our industry** and identify areas where we can improve our human resources strategies to **promote the healthy growth of the industry**.

Our most recent LMI report (June 2016), identifies our industry's most pressing HR challenges and provides strategic suggestions that can be incorporated into Human Resource programs such as pay and benefit structures to name just two, to **ensure sustained development** of the sector. It provides details on:

- Major needs and issues facing the sector
- Economic factors that shape skills plus labour supply and demand
- Effects of skills and labour shortages
- Occupations and skills that businesses need to meet their workforce needs
- Recommended strategies to develop and sustain a strong and successful workforce

## THOROUGH RESEARCH FOR A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF KEY INDUSTRY ISSUES

In addition to being used by companies operating in our industry, the LMI studies have also been used by governments, policy makers, associations, manufacturers and post-secondary institutions to justify equipment retention or purchases, expand outreach and consulting services and to support their proposal writing, business cases and fundraising activities for important initiatives.



## RECRUITING INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

One of the best ways to promote our industry to prospective recruits is through the sharing of **practical information to facilitate informed decision making**. The WMC has extensive experience and knowledge available for use by manufacturers across the country, to encourage both students and job-seekers to consider careers in our dynamic industry. **Leveraging these existing materials will enable employers to help candidates** understand the depth and breadth of opportunities that exist.

There are many different career paths in the wood manufacturing industry, from design to production to installation, management and more. To support recruiting efforts, the WMC has created a number of informative occupational profiles (available at [www.careersinwood.ca](http://www.careersinwood.ca)). These profiles are extremely useful to give students and prospective employees an **overview of many aspects of various industry opportunities**. Each occupation profile includes details regarding job description, main duties and work environment. They outline skills and abilities, meaning the personal characteristics suitable for a given role. Education and training requirements plus essential skills needed are also provided. In addition, a personal profile of an individual working in that position offers a first-hand account of their background, key skills, and what they enjoy about the work they do.

The frequently asked questions section of the Careers in Wood website offers additional helpful information that prospective employees as well as students, parents and educators may find useful. A good overview of the educational options, including the WMC's own WoodLINKS program for high school students and the many post-secondary programs across the country, to prepare for a successful career in the advanced wood sector, is also available.

## ENCOURAGING PROSPECTS TO BUILD A SOLID CAREER IN WOOD

In addition to developing and sharing materials that companies can use to support their own recruiting efforts, the WMC also offers classroom presentations on career opportunities in our sector – everything from trades and apprenticeships, to shop supervisors and even top-level management. Material is available for classroom presentations which can be delivered to audiences across Canada, working with industry, schools and community groups to **open young minds to the broad spectrum of opportunities** in the advanced wood manufacturing industry. Where possible, WMC also attends career fairs and educator events to promote careers in the sector. Our goal is to **help our industry partners showcase a vibrant career pathway** to young people who are technically inclined, creative problem-solvers, and like working with their hands.





## STANDARDS HELP IMPROVE EDUCATION, RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

National Occupational Standards (NOS) were developed to provide a general standard for various occupations in the sector. They identify the skills and knowledge needed for workers to perform competently in the workplace. The standards serve as a foundation for **developing a better qualified workforce**, managing staff and enhancing workers' performance.

The NOS detail the tasks, subtasks and supporting knowledge and abilities required to perform in a specific occupation, thereby providing employers with a basis for the development of comprehensive job descriptions, performance assessments, employee management and more, by:

- Providing performance benchmarks
- Helping fill labour requirements more effectively
- Furthering the development of skills recognition for a particular occupation.

WMC has developed NOS for several occupations in the advanced wood manufacturing industry (finisher, machine operator, supervisor, assembler, operations manager, product designer and installer). The creation of NOS means employers can **focus**

**recruitment efforts on the specific workers they need**, and make better matches between employees and available positions. Not only are the NOS a **valuable tool to recruit new employees**, they also assist with developing interview guides, defining industry and job requirements, introducing certification programs and establishing succession plans. For educators, the NOS mean students are better served thanks to curriculum development and adaptation that is based on clear, consistent training requirements and broad industry input into current occupational skills requirements.

The NOS benefit workers as well, by providing detailed descriptions of the qualifications required to gain employment and advance in the industry. Employees are better able to **plan and prepare for a career path** thanks to the identification of skills requiring upgrading. They set benchmarks for skills and knowledge in key occupations and provide a common definition of an occupation to support labour mobility.

## MORE SKILLED WORKERS MEANS BETTER PRODUCTIVITY

All the NOS were designed by the WMC in collaboration with industry and occupational experts to accurately reflect realistic, **best-practice standards of performance**. There is also an employers' guide that outlines how to use the NOS most effectively. These documents are intended to be used by business owners or HR managers to help develop a solid human resource strategy, facilitate improved job performance and reap the benefits of increased productivity.





## FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING THE KEY TO SOLID TO OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS

Essential Skills form the backbone of all occupational skill sets. As the foundation for learning all other skills, Essential Skills help people **evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace changes**. From calculating measurements to mastering new technology, employees in the advanced wood manufacturing industry use these skills every day.

The nine Essential Skills and examples of where they are applicable are:

- Reading text (reading instruction manuals)
- Document use (reading and completing forms, interpreting charts)
- Writing (writing information on log sheets)
- Numeracy (performing calculations)
- Oral communication (interacting with supervisor to discuss work load)
- Thinking skills (problem solving, decision making, critical thinking)
- Working with others (coordinating work with co-workers)
- Computer use (writing an email)
- Continuous learning (attending training to learn more on a new technique or technology)

Improving Essential Skills, particularly those related to literacy, numeracy and communication, has long been a **shared objective in our industry**. In addition to its usefulness in the workplace, the Essential Skills Assessment tool has proven to be extremely beneficial

for WERC, WMC's pre-employment training program. WERC has been a component of WMC's ongoing efforts to enhance the wood industry's awareness of the benefits of upgrading the proficiency of essential skills.

WMC has created the Essential Skills Assessment to help business owners and employees in the wood industry to **identify the basic skills needed and target areas for improvement**. The tool assesses current and prospective employees on the five Essential Skills (reading text, writing, numeracy, document use and thinking skills) which are key to working in the advanced wood manufacturing sector. Based on the assessment, employers can **confidently place workers in the appropriate jobs** and tailor required training and career paths to meet individual needs. The program is highly relevant because all materials are specific to the wood industry. Students work with real industry examples which are reflective of situations they would encounter on the job.

## ASSESSMENT OF ESSENTIAL SKILLS OFFERS MULTIPLE BENEFITS

There are numerous benefits of assessing Essential Skills and addressing any shortfalls. They include **greater employee productivity**, more versatile workers, better retention rates, enhanced morale and improved teamwork. In addition, companies will experience higher quality products, **increased revenues**, reduced errors and overtime and a safer workplace.



### TRAINING HELPS ATTRACT AND KEEP SKILLED WORKERS

The RISE program was developed to help business owners meet the challenge of **enhancing worker skill development** within their own workplaces. By participating in practical plant floor training that is customized to each organization's specific needs, new staff acquires needed skills from experienced workers. These sessions also assist with cross training, **making new employees more versatile**. Eventually these new workers become trainers themselves, making the program **highly sustainable**.

Training is hands-on and takes place on the job with only a minimal amount of classroom time. Participants will develop their own skills — and the ability to train fellow plant floor workers — in key areas, such as:

- General safety
- Taxonomy and grading
- Production documentation
- Solid wood processing machinery
- Panel processing machinery
- Tooling
- Preventative maintenance
- Surface preparation
- Finishing

### LEVERAGE THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUR OWN STAFF

While over 88,000 Canadians are currently employed in the advanced wood manufacturing sector, **demand for new workers grows every year**.

There are great opportunities in many different roles in the industry suitable for people with a wide variety of backgrounds. On the job training through RISE helps workers become productive more quickly and **ensures skills are passed** on by knowledgeable, experienced team members.





## MAKING THE LINK BETWEEN WORKERS AND WOOD

The untapped potential of workers with prior training and established skills is something many companies in our industry can capitalize upon. By developing a protocol to assess and **recognize the capabilities a worker has acquired** through education, work and other experience, we can **expand our labour pool** with job-ready talent.

The PLAR Workbench supports the ability of sector firms to understand the value of qualifications obtained outside of formal or structured education programs, from working in industries aside from the advanced wood products sector or via training accomplished outside Canada. As a result, our **companies save money and time** by more efficiently and effectively finding new employees beyond the traditional labour pools.

PLAR **streamlines the HR process** by helping employers to determine both the capabilities and suitability of job candidates, matching workers with appropriate positions and workplaces. It helps companies identify and capitalize upon the value of a potential employee's work and life experiences. PLAR is a pragmatic tool to help make it easier for companies in the wood manufacturing industry to meet their labour needs by employing workers from outside industries with transferable skills.

## HELPING POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF CAREERS IN WOOD

At the same time, PLAR helps **promote careers in our industry** to people who may not realize their training and qualifications are both applicable and in demand. It also saves new and prospective employees effort, time and in some cases money, by eliminating duplication of training.