



Welcome to the educational update part of the MRMA Newsletter.

I am Sam Ajlani, College of Central Florida, Associate Professor/Program Director, Engineering Technology | Business, Technology and Workforce and serve on the Mid-FL Regional Manufacturers Association Board of Directors as Educational Liaison, providing you a monthly educational update.

Are you wasting your training dollars?

Let's talk about your training dollars. The College of Central Florida (CF) would love to have those dollars in exchange for training your employees! Make no mistake about it! However, CF is not in the habit of just training for dollars. It's not about making a profit from any company that needs training. CF is here to help and support our local industries by providing the needs a company has, even if they do not know what those needs are exactly.

So you may ask "what do you mean Sam"? "Are you saying CF just wants our dollars"? My answer is "in a way yes, and in a way no". The "yes" part comes from the fact that CF wants to be the sole training provider for all industry in our service area. CF is not in business to earn a profit, but rather CF is in the business of teaching and training. Therefore, yes we want your money, but not just to throw some information out at you and hope you get it. CF holds itself to a much higher standard. It's about providing a quality training program and/or session to get the specific skills your company truly needs. Especially if you are looking to a specific certification.

That now leads to the "no" part of my answer. Again, CF is not in for business for profit. Therefore CF is not only holding to higher standard, but needs be efficient in providing training to reduce the costs for the college and be more specific and conscious to the needs of the company. I see advertisements all the time from companies that provide training on various topics in manufacturing. Everything from skills to management of systems. I have found over the years that these private training companies tend to be what the education industry calls "fire hose approach" where you are flooded with information in a one to three-day training session.

Remember these are for profit training companies that are looking to maximize their dollars through training verses maximizing their training to earn dollars. There is a huge difference! Personally, I look at it as a hard fast rain verses a slow steady rain. Which one of these will soak in better? One example is the training that a lot of manufacturer's attend dealing with Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs). A lot of OEM companies provide this training for level one over about three to five days. The employee now goes back to their facility, but does need to apply these skills for say six months. The "fire hose approach" was no good for this employee because they did not absorb the training due to the short time and massive information that was given. The same training broken down to a more manageable sessions over several weeks allow the employee to absorb more information in a reasonable amount of time (slow steady rain). I see companies trying to get these types of skills in many areas using the "fire hose approach". This tends to be a waste of money as the employee is now expected to use the learned skills and cannot repeat what they were supposed to absorb. Yes, you guessed it, they were hosed!

Even worse than that, companies send employees for training not even knowing the skill level of the employee. Many employees have no idea what the training they are attending is about and have trouble understanding the concepts being taught. A lot of companies just throw bodies at training to be sure their training dollars are spent by the end of the Fiscal Year. That is why training opportunities are wasted. On top of that, the company feels like the training was no good because the employee was not able to apply anything from the training. So these poor employees were not only hosed, but set up for failure.

That is why at CF the mission is to provide quality training that companies can depend on to maximize their dollars. With a shortage of skilled workers, you may ask why would any company waste their training dollars? At CF, we asked ourselves this question and came up with an answer to provide maximization of training dollars. Not for more money, but for quality of training. When a company comes to CF for training and says I want to train a bunch of employees on a skill, we push back and ask how do you know these folks need that level of training? Why train an employee that has a high level of skill in a basic course? Why train an entry-level employee in an advanced course? This is where training dollars are wasted. CF has the resources to assess employees on their knowledge and skill levels at low or no cost. Believe me the two are different and need to be assessed to determine if an employee must have basic up to advanced or can start at an intermediate level. Now we are maximizing the dollars and perhaps have room to spend on more training in other areas.

If you are interested in assessing employ skills, technical training or are looking to train in robotics, contact Loren Carr in the Corporate College at corporatecollege@cf.edu or Sam Ajlani at ajlanis@cf.edu for more details.

Also remember, there are still plenty of students to hire or use in an intern or apprenticeship, if you have a need. For more information on internships, please contact **Bonnie Hays, Business & Technology Coordinator**, haysb@cf.edu, Ext. 1855.

If you are interested in being a part of the solution to finding high skilled employees, join the Business Advisory Councils (BAC) for Engineering and Logistics committee by letting either Kathleen Betz, Executive Director of MRMA, or Sam Ajlani at ajlanis@cf.edu know you are interested, and we can help you make contact.

For more information on these education and training articles, contact Sam Ajlani at ajlanis@cf.edu or call 352-873-5800, ext. 1471.