
Workforce Education - Meeting Market Demand

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Introduction

- I'm Ezra Auerbach
Chair person NABCEP and,
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- Today I'll be talking with both hats on

Perspectives

- As a long-term Board member I've seen strong demand for Professional Certification from installers, manufacturers, educators and program planners.
 - NABCEP Installer Certifications and Entry Level Certificates of Knowledge have clearly filled a "market"void.

Perspectives

- As an employer with open Applications Engineering positions I see a lot of resumes - everybody wants to "do" solar.
 - For good reason the applicants with NABCEP Installer Certification get interviews.
 - I know that these candidates know their way around PV installations and that they are also conversant with system design principles.

Relevant and Meaningful

- NABCEP Certification offers individuals with a diverse backgrounds a common means to demonstrate their professional achievement in a specific and focused area of expertise.

Relevant and Meaningful

- 422 individuals hold NABCEP PV Installer Certification and 56 Individuals hold Solar Thermal Installer Certification.
 - We have seen an average 24% growth rate year after year,
 - Certificants are using this level of professional achievement and recognition for career advancement,
 - “NABCEP Certification an asset” is showing up in employment advertisements more often.

Relevant and Meaningful

- 34 Colleges and other renewable energy training organizations offer courses which culminate with an optional NABCEP Certificate of Knowledge exam.
 - Since we began to offer the “NABCEP Certificate of Knowledge 22 Certificate holders have gained sufficient experience to qualify to sit for the PV Installers Exam.
 - Three of the “earliest crop” have taken the exam and passed and are now NABCEP Certified PV Installers.

Relevant and Meaningful

- Most inverter and BOS manufacturers offer training which qualifies for NABCEP Continuing Education credits.
- Many private individuals also teach CE courses.
 - Installers have made their desire to have their training time count for CE credits and industry has responded
 - Many Distributors support their customers to become NABCEP Certified with financial incentives or by providing special training programs.

Relevant and Meaningful

- NABCEP Certification offers renewable incentive program planners a reference standard of professionalism which is “application” specific.
 - Many State programs encourage PV and ST System applicants to seek NABCEP Certification,
 - Others, including Wisconsin, Ohio and Austin, Texas are phasing in requirements for NABCEP.

Relevant and Meaningful

- NABCEP Certification is not intended to replace or supplant jurisdiction specific requirements for trade qualifications or licenses.
 - NABCEP Certifications bring together and document a degree of “solar professionalism” which goes well beyond knowledge of job safety and code compliant procedures.
 - All NABCEP Installer Certificants must demonstrate must document that their work has been permitted and inspected by the relevant local authority – real world inspections of workmanship.

Education and NABCEP

- There is a huge role for community colleges, vocational schools, and private trainings organizations to play in growing and deploying a work force trained for the growing renewable energy industry.

Education and NABCEP

- The most common questions we receive at NABCEP are about training and career advancement:
 - “How do I get started training for a career in solar energy?”
 - “Who offers courses to help me advance my career?”
 - “Where can I take NABCEP exam prep courses?”
 - Who offers hands-on courses on PV and solar thermal?”

Education and NABCEP

- We don't have enough answers for those questions.
- I'm here to encourage you to help us provide answers.
 - We need more entry level training courses for people looking to get started in renewables,
 - We need more courses aimed at helping workers prepare for Installer Certification exams, and
 - We need more seminars aimed at consumers who want "to do the right thing" but aren't sure what how to go about making a sound purchase decision.

Education and NABCEP

- To keep up with student and industry demand we hope that education programs will evolve to include:
 - Working laboratories where students gain hands-on exposure to solar thermal and electric equipment,
 - Outreach to the local installer community to get students real-world on the job experience.

We're hiring

- In closing I want to emphasize that the solar industry is in hiring mode.
 - We are looking for all level of employees from sales, to application support to installers;
 - The common thread we are looking for is relevant solar industry training, experience and certifications.
 - The resumes which cross my desk that get the most attention have NABCEP and other relevant trade qualifications or credentials.

- Thank you

- Questions?