

**Saskatchewan Apprenticeship  
and Trade Certification Commission**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK  
2009-2012**

Commission Board approved, May 27, 2009

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**SATCC 2009-2012 STRATEGIC  
PLANNING SUMMARY**

## **A. SATCC 2009-2012 STRATEGIC PLANNING SUMMARY**

With significant business and industry input, the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) embarked on a strategic planning process in January, 2009 leading to the development of a strategic plan for 2009-2012.

Members of the SATCC Board, SATCC staff, Trade Boards, industry, and business participated in input-gathering sessions in conjunction with a planning session on January 29, 2009. Subsequent to the session, staff and management were invited to prioritize the proposed strategies. Based on that input, as well as consultation with Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour (AEEL) officials, management developed the 2009-2012 strategic plan and the 2009-2010 business plan.

The following Themes represent a summary of the input sessions:

### **Theme 1 – Consultation**

Key stakeholders to be consulted were identified as: employers (large and small); SATCC staff; diversity groups; apprentices; journeypersons; tradespersons; Aboriginal people; training deliverers including the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIASST), Regional Colleges, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT); high schools; government partners including Advanced Education, Employment and Labour (AEEL), Treasury Broad, Federal Departments, Immigration, and Municipalities; stakeholders including Business Associations and Unions; and non-participating employers.

Techniques used to contact the stakeholders were identified as information blitzes, surveys of needs and satisfaction ratings (using different mediums), media, networking and focus groups, tradeshow/career fairs, sector-specific face-to-face meetings (annual review, progress and revisit strategic direction), SATCC presentations at stakeholder conferences and meetings (town hall), provincial conference to launch new strategic vision, school visits to talk with teachers and parents, and dialogue with trainers to identify what is lacking in education. These techniques were not prioritized.

Consultation topics or needs included assessment of quality of product, other trades required to be designated and training needs, addressing apprenticeship participation challenges in non-compulsory trades, relevance of training to employers and apprentices, government direction and the impact on SATCC, capacity and capability of training partners, barriers to employer participation, and greater participation from high schools and school boards.

### **Theme 2 – Service Delivery**

The topic of customer service was addressed. Good customer service was defined as timely and accurate exchange of information, responsiveness to industry demand, specific knowledge of demand numbers, identification of training demands based on

labour market analysis, prompt and welcoming, approachable feeling, uniform treatment across province, and available and consistent.

The next area of discussion was about ways SATCC could measure customer service delivery. Some measures included completion rate, drop-out rates and reasons, employment rates of the journeypersons, awareness of added value of the trades, positive feedback and customer interaction measures.

The final topic was about how SATCC could improve customer service. Responses included resources and training for increased responsiveness - in house, ability to adapt to change (skills and knowledge), prioritizing work load and managing customer expectations, ensuring prompt follow-up (communication is key), availability, education (staff, employers, industries), continuous consultation, and creating positive first impressions.

### **Theme 3 – Training Standards**

The first part of the discussion was around alternative methods for training delivery.

- Non standard times/locations
- Time/season constraints
- Various delivery modes/modules
- Deliver training to accommodate location
- Field/workplace training
- Early skill training comprehensive
- Development of new quality/capacity
- Support instructor/industry
- Renewal of equipment, practices, procedures
- Relevant reviews
- Mentor skill development (train the trainees)
- Practical, theory, communication (lots of resources on safety)
- Online training available when appropriate
- Increase dialogue between training providers
- Offer training and flexibility e.g. summer, evenings, weekends, and online
- Identify and deliver training tools e.g.- English as a second language, and literacy
- Financial challenge - shorter blocks, more frequent
- Integration and efficiency in training capacity
- Training providers taking ownership of accommodation issues
- Improve training by collaboration with other agencies e.g. Immigration, open door society, cultural groups
- Provide enhanced feedback and next steps for apprenticeship

Given the identified priority for target groups, the input sessions looked at improvements to training delivery specific to those groups. Some suggestions included: immigration - initial integration support, Women in Trades and Technology - job mediator (question/approach/support), Aboriginal/First Nations - ongoing job link support, systemic support and linkage, and apprentice assistants/training coaches.

#### **Theme 4 - Effectiveness**

The focus of this theme was to measure program effectiveness. Some measures were identified and these include monitoring recruitment numbers and retention numbers, following up employers' changes, new journeypersons taking apprentices, building a workplace culture that supports apprentices and new programs, manager/supervisor training, supporting management awareness, referring to similar programs from other provinces and systems, and building effective partnerships – e.g., - SIAST, SIIT, Dumont Technical Institute (DTI), Regional Colleges. It was suggested to look at an apprenticeship inventory - tracking the number of people who leave their home location to continue the program, and the impact on the community. In measuring effectiveness in the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship (SYA) Program, Grade 12 marks could be compared for SYA and non-SYA participants, and to monitor to determine if average age of apprentices decreased. Measuring overall effectiveness could include other measures such as success of new programs in addressing barriers for intellectual/physical disabilities and cultural differences, educational approaches, training flexibility, trades quality, impact on provincial growth equals trades effectiveness, new hire rates and indenture requests, and assessment of existing measures.

#### **Theme 5 – Research and Development**

More research is needed to understand the needs and demands for training and/or apprenticeship. This could be done through more detailed information on curriculum available to apprentices and employers, endorsements to recognize and assess achievements and/or skill development, more dialogue among interested organizations, input from journeypersons status (e.g.,- survey on effectiveness, training programs), demand requirements (forecasting), international transferable qualifications, demographics of instructors (to determine future targets), accommodation requirements, wage surveys, and areas of training that must be addressed on site, educate employers to make employers accountable, and partnerships with other provinces on research needs to identify best practices.

#### **Theme 6 – Workplace Attraction**

This theme focused on ways to attract target groups – aboriginal people, women, youth, and immigrants – to the trades. Ideas included on-site promotion to schools and work places, bringing role models to classrooms, education on mentorship-apprenticeship/journeyperson culture, better access to training in areas outside the SIAST and Regional Colleges, Essential Skills training before entering the workforce (set up to succeed to reduce the turnover rate), providing “refreshers” on training/codes and skill upgrades, adapting apprenticeship to accommodate the expectations of “new”

apprentices, collaboration with aboriginal education institutions, and giving more options to receiving status (other than Journeyperson) to trades people. Employers were considered the best positioned to recruit the target groups. More work is needed to outline pay grids and pay expectations.

General comments on all themes ranged from concerns managing existing workloads, modifying curriculum, projecting apprentice needs out 5-10 years, and better ways to assess/recognize credentials of foreign trained workers.

From these general themes, the strategic plan builds upon current initiatives and offers six areas of focus:

- Developing and delivering quality programs which respond to industry need;
- Attracting and developing capable staff;
- Promoting skilled trades as careers of choice;
- Communicating key messages regarding apprenticeship initiatives;
- Ensuring sufficient financial resources through partnerships; and
- Improving infrastructure, technology and operating processes to be more efficient.