

Applied Professional Training



Newsletter

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APT – Who We Are

Applied Professional Training

We are a CWA represented training vendor; Local 9509 (San Diego, CA), with the following affiliations: Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), American Council on Education (ACE), Electronics Technicians Association (ETA), Association of Communications and Electronics Schools (ACES), Fiber Optics Association (FOA), and Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Corporate Philosophy

Our intent is to design training classes enriched with up-to-date information so that students will achieve success in their corporate and personal goals. Our motto is "If our students achieve success, then APT has achieved success."

Educational Philosophy

APT is dedicated to effective, high quality and state-of-the-art technical education that assures all students receive training on industry's most recent developments.

Our Instructor Staff

APT selects only the highest qualified industry professionals who understand APT's valued corporate philosophies. Our instructors bring students a combination of on the job experience, formal education, and teaching experience. ➤

Unions, Seniority and Job Security - A Roadmap to Success

This edition of our APT Newsletter will focus on various aspects of your telecommunications job including your union, job security and the nature and outlook of the telecommunications industry. This edition will provide to you a roadmap to success in the form of required job skills and a recommended training path that will provide these skills; skills that will assist in your ability to meet requirements for jobs in a rapidly changing telecommunications industry. We start below with a review of unions, our CWA, and the question of seniority and job security.

Our CWA Union

Unions, in general, are critically important in our society both in terms of economic and political issues that affect the worker, and especially for the fact that they perform the most basic function of protecting their members' position in the workplace. The CWA lives up to this with ongoing support of its members in issues such as Health Care Reform and pension plan protection.

Job Security and Seniority

On the individual level, the unions continues to fight for job security of individuals; especially when it comes to seniority where it protects the "jobs" of the union member and their right to improve their working conditions in accordance with their length of service. This protection is becoming increasingly difficult to provide. Historically, unions have always been resistant to anything that threatens the protections offered by seniority. More recently, however, and for various reasons, some unions are now agreeing to "modify" seniority provisions in their contract negotiations in order to gain other concessions.

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Telecommunications

Nature of the Industry

The following information is taken from the U.S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics, (DOL/BLS) 2004-2005 Career Guide to Industries*. We summarize this information here to support our representation of the telecommunications industry as a rapidly changing environment, to provide you with an outlook as to the industry direction, and to support our contention that YOU, as a telco employee, **need to carefully consider your position in your company in terms of job skills, training, and certifications.**

Significant Points: (from the DOL/BLS Career Guide):

- Telecommunications includes voice, video, and Internet communications services
- Job growth will be limited by over capacity, technological advances, mergers and **contracting out**
- With rapid technological changes in telecommunications, **those with up-to-date technical skills will have the best job opportunities**
- Average earnings in telecommunications greatly exceed average earnings throughout private industry

These points are inclusive to an industry where voice service over copper wire is no longer the primary service of the industry. We are now looking at the transmission of a variety of information, including data, graphics and video over fiber optics cables, in an industry that integrates both wire-line and wireless data networks. So our questions to you: **Do your current skills make you competitive in this environment? Are you "QUALIFIED" for jobs in this environment? Will your job be "contracted out" because you don't have the necessary skills?** These are critical questions to consider for your future in the telecommunications industry. As stated in the Bureau of Labor Statistics points: "...**those with up-to-date technical skills will have the best job opportunities**".

Are you prepared for this?

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Training and Advancement

Other points made in the DOL/BLS Career Guide relate to training and advancement opportunities:

- Most companies prefer to hire telecommunication equipment installers and repair technicians with postsecondary training in electronics (i.e., APT)
- Good training programs include college programs in electronics or communications, accredited trade schools that offer **industry certifications**, and equipment and software manufactures that offer industry certifications
- **Continuing education is very important** for engineers and other high-technical skill positions; those who fail to keep up with the rapid changes in technology risk technical obsolescence which makes them more susceptible to layoffs or passed over for advancement

Industry Outlook

Other points made by the BLS relate to the outlook of the industry in terms of jobs. These include:

- Excess capacity and debt among the telcos will limit employment opportunities, but rising demand for telecommunications services will eventually **result in increased job growth**
- Residential demand will increase as technology and competition lower prices for IP Centric services over fiber. **Individuals with up-to-date technical skills will have the best employment opportunities**
- Employment of line installers and repairers is expected to grow as providers maintain and expand their networks due to demand
- Employment of equipment installers and repair technicians will decrease due to newer and more reliable technologies and the tendencies to contract this work out to specialized contractors. However, there still will be **many opportunities available for individuals with the necessary technical skills.**

What does this all mean to you?...it means the need to acquire skills...skills that you get from training.

Take advantage of free training provided by your union negotiated benefits. ♡

The Roadmap to Success

As a roadmap to the skills you'll need for telco jobs, we recommend the following:

- APT's **Basic Electronics** course provides knowledge in AC/DC concepts needed to pass job entrance/transfer exams, and provides a foundation for understanding more advanced technical concepts offered in other courses. Basic Electronics is a good starting point for non-technical employees that want to migrate to technical jobs.
- **Fiber Optics Communications** course provides a comprehensive review of fiber optics fundamentals, including applications such as FTTx, and SONET. This course is a logical next step both for those with basic electronics background and those without.
- You're now ready for **Central Office Telecommunications** (COT). In COT, we use a detailed floor plan of a CO to review all the equipment types and services provided for in the CO. This includes operation and application of the Class 5 switch, the T1 transport, the Main Distribution Frame, the Digital Access & Cross Connect System (DACS), the ATM and Frame Relay packet switches and other equipment in the CO.
- Our **Data Communications Series** courses provide a knowledge foundation in packet technology including OSI and TCP/IP. We review all network types, topologies and protocols used today for transmitting data over fiber and copper media. We include how data is represented, encoded and transmitted, and how multiplexing and modulation technologies are used to control these transmissions.
- Now you're set for **Voice over IP** (VoIP). Understanding the CO and its services provides a good comparison with how the VoIP network accomplishes voice and other real-time data transmission using Proxy Servers, IP Phones and analog phone adapters.
- Finally, **Data Cabling**, where you'll learn industry wiring standards, and you'll learn to terminate copper, coax and fiber terminals in a building, including use of punch-down tools and terminating crimpers.

Most of APT's courses include extensive hands-on activities! ➤

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This is why some contracts now include language that allows for contractors to be hired when "**qualified**" employees are not available.

The following is a recent example of seniority not being the final consideration. A decision was made to cut installation/repair staff in an area where three techs were involved. One tech with 16 years was the only one "cable qualified". Another tech had 26 years of service, and the third was a 33 year non-qualified apprentice. Management wanted to keep one cable-qualified tech and one non-qualified tech in the area. The decision...the 26 year tech had to go to a different location. This tech lost his 23 year job at this location to a 16 year technician. Bottom line...seniority alone is no guarantee of job security.

So to YOU then, the question of job security becomes more critical. Think about it...take a moment here to pause and ask yourself...***"if I don't have the necessary skills, even with high seniority, am I really secure in my job?....am I skills QUALIFIED?"***

Consider the telecomm industry's latest:

- SUPERCOMM '05 (June 2005) convention in Chicago: plans by telephone companies to roll out IP TV services and WiMAX technology were both the big buzz words of the day
- Verizon and SBC are now urging changes to TV franchise rules because of IPTV plans
- BellSouth has just announced plans to roll out IPTV Service
- FTTx Deployment continues at a fast pace to support VoIP and IPTV services

These news items reflect the rapid changes occurring in the telecommunications industry. Will you continue to be part of this fast changing environment? Bottom Line: **Job skills will make the difference.** ➤

If I don't have the necessary skills, even with high seniority, am I really secure in my job?



What We're Hearing about Training

"Get your VoIP and FO certifications now and be competitive, don't let the future pass you by."

Sandra Martinez, President
CWA Local 9509

"Some 200+ members of CWA Local 9503, employees of SBC who work in the North Hollywood 611 Repair Bureau, were told in November, 2004, that their work would be sent to Sacramento by the end of 2007.

APT responded quickly and put together classes to meet the requirements of 9503's members: great training RIGHT NOW! APT is currently training and scheduling more classes in basic electricity, fiber optics, and Voice over IP, in short, training for the jobs of the future. Thanks APT for your knowledgeable and compassionate instructors and leadership."

Dan McCrory, President
CWA Local 9503.

"We have a large number of members willing to take classes if those classes provide something of value. Training that meets certain job prerequisites and/or testing requirements for future job openings at Qwest are of most interest. I encourage our members to take advantage of their Pathways benefits so that they can be prepared for future opportunities."

Kent Anderson, President
CWA Local 7704

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"Although we always try to insist that company training be done by seniority/volunteer, HORIZONS/vendor training is employee generated, thereby giving those who choose to take training on their own time the possibility of gaining skills codes by which to update their own resume. In doing so, it's possible to bid on and be awarded jobs in AUTS not necessarily by seniority; that's how the system works.

Recently the company has moved into placing fiber to the prem (FTTP) and are having Service Technicians place the equipment and do all the work at the customer premise. This requires some additional training. While we insist that company provided training be done by seniority, those employees who have taken the appropriate classes on their own time are also being given this work to perform, regardless of seniority. This is what's happening in Local 9404 territory and the Local is in complete agreement with this practice. It's a good mix. Seniority means something as does vendor provided training."

Carol Whichard, President
CWA Local 9404

My Commitment To You!

"I challenge staff to make sure APT knows what the industry needs regarding jobs 2-4 years down the road and provide the best technical training courses available with the appropriate certifications and college credits to make our fellow union members best qualified for those jobs."

Steve Blume, President
Applied Professional Training, Inc.

Applied Professional Training Inc.

(800)431-8488

Applied Professional Training Inc.
PO Box: 131717
Carlsbad, CA 92013
(800) 431-8488

