



'ANGUS BARKS'

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AEG Executive Board

On the Job Training

Everyone agrees training is a good thing. Producing good quality jet engine hardware starts with good training.

It is in your interest to know your job well, so you can avoid the quality mistakes that lead to individual discipline. The Union wants our members to have the skills and knowledge needed to develop new work, and solve problems with existing work.

The Company wants employees who have the skills and versatility to respond to volume changes, and cover absences due to illness and vacation.

BIG ISSUE

With all this agreement then, why is training an issue in most areas of the plant? 65 employees were hired off the street this year, and 130 upgraded to new jobs. But that's not the whole picture. Areas with veteran workers also have issues with cross-training. There's only one clear pattern: those workgroups with stewards and members who push for training, insist on training, and defend training, have the best results.

PIGEON-HOLED

Typically, a new employee in a group trains on days with an experienced co-worker. Once they become proficient in one operation, or on some basic ones, they're shipped to the off-shift. There the cell-leader marries them to the few operations they know, to get the best possible productivity numbers. The new employee must squawk and squawk, to get further training. Due to inexperience, or personality, some of our new members are unwilling to squawk.

GRIEVANCES

Unfortunately, nothing in the Union contract requires the Company to train an employee on the full scope of their job. We can grieve when the Company's failure to train results in a member falling behind their workgroup in overtime opportunity. Well-organized workgroups use this shop-floor strategy to get training. You need an overtime list with well-defended rules to prove your point.

COMPLICATIONS

Of course, each workgroup has it's own mix of difficult jobs and easy jobs, and it's own mix of personalities and mechanical aptitudes. That's why training issues are best resolved by the workgroup and steward, with the cell-leader and manager. Union and Company reps at higher levels can assist the shop-floor group by suggesting a training matrix, or rotating schedule for training.

Some members like their pigeonhole, and don't welcome greater responsibility. Limited job scope also means limited overtime opportunity. Those workgroups that fight for equal training, run a strong overtime list, and rotate job assignments, are the best areas to work in.

TIME IS MONEY

Good training takes time. That time is vouchered as IME. This year IME has been micro-managed so closely, it has worked against training. We've had trainers told they're expected to maintain regular productivity while training new employees. This is ridiculous and insulting. An employee who upgraded asked off the job the first week because he was pressured for DLP before he got decent training. We now have whole workgroups without anyone who knows the full scope of the job.

The Union believes training should be vouchered in a good account, that is a credit to the manager. But given today's reality, workgroups, stewards or cell-leaders should present training plans designed around specific hours, operations and individuals, and demand a commitment in training hours from the manager.

***THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE VALUABLE YOU ARE.
THE SQUEAKY WHEEL GETS THE OIL.***

