



Canadian Corrugated and
Containerboard Association
Association canadienne du
cartonnage ondulé et du
carton-caisse



Veronica Botnick
CCCA

Apprenticeships are Priceless - Introducing Industrial Electricians Through SOY

“Learn to live in the awkward”. This is the advice given by Melanie Winter, Program Manager for the Industrial trades with Support Ontario Youth (SOY), on how to transition from school into the workforce.

SOY’s goal is to prepare and aid Ontarians interested in skilled trades apprenticeships.

Often, Ontarians looking to enter the skilled trades job market run into a well-known negative feedback loop. Employers are looking for individuals with experience yet struggle to provide this work experience. That is where SOY comes in. By matching apprentices to employers, SOY supports both the apprentice and the employer by removing barriers and helping navigate the apprenticeship journey.

With the recovering supply chain, the Canadian Corrugated and Containerboard Association (CCCA) has partnered with SOY to bring on more industrial electricians. This is to help ensure an efficient and positive experience while completing their apprenticeships, and ultimately as they transition into a fully skilled tradesperson.

SOY offers a variety of resources for employers and apprentices while acting as a bridge for candidates in multiple trades. Committed and aspiring apprentices come to SOY in hopes of learning to “live in the awkward”. They understand the apprenticeship journey through coaching, mentoring, and networking, giving them the tools to communicate with their peers and more experienced individuals in the industry.

This is not the first time the CCCA has worked with SOY for apprentices. The CCCA began their partnership with SOY through the industrial millwright trade. These apprentices are an asset to the CCCA– not only are they knowledgeable from the get-go, but their positive energy also inspires the team to take on new challenges.

Apprentices with CCCA can work towards achieving their Red Seal Certification as a millwright, construction personnel, maintenance electrician, and/or industrial electrician. After completing their required hours, a Red Seal certified apprentice can work in any province or territory. This is a great opportunity to launching a nationwide career!

“So often, students are thrown into workplaces with little training on how to engage with their peers, supervisors, and managers. Through SOY’s apprenticeship support, apprentices from across Ontario can enter and grow in the trades with this type of mentorship, no matter the season”, said Melanie.

SOY also helps address and develop hard- and soft-skills, where apprentices learn how to effectively communicate. There is power in being thrown into a networking event – for example, candidates will learn how to talk about their well-developed skills in 15 seconds.

Melanie leaves us with a couple more pieces of advice: “One, learning is a lifelong journey. Whether you are 18 or 38, just know your mind will change. And two, learn from each other's diverse backgrounds and trust the journey”.

It is inspiring to know the individuals joining the CCCA team from SOY have a role model dedicated to supporting their growth.

The CCCA and SOY are eager to support incoming apprentices in their careers in the trades. Together, we help each other create a stronger and healthier workforce for future generations. Reach out to info@cccabox.org or info@supportontarioyouth.ca for more information on how we can get you started.

We all know that apprenticeships are valuable to both the individual and the company. For the apprentice though, it can secure their career in a desired field while supporting the global workforce. Indeed, the value and experience of an apprenticeship is priceless in today's job market.