TRANSFORMATION OR EXTINCTION: TIME FOR REINVENTION
MAY 30, 2020
1. Do employers recognize continuing professional development (CPD)?

Employers have been very supportive of OACETT's mandatory CPD program, realizing that someone invested in lifelong learning makes a better employee. Many have been working with their staff to ensure compliance, and others have reached out to us to ensure their employees' requirements also meet OACETT's requirements.

2. I wish to know if OACETT will coordinate the application for LET, instead of the member contacting the PEO office directly. Please advise the first step.

PEO is responsible for the LET as it is a form of limited engineering license. As a C.E.T. you are engaging with their application process and their requirements. Having OACETT be an intermediary in this process is not required and would add an unnecessary step. You may start the process by reading the PEO website's requirements for a limited license at this link: https://peo.on.ca/licence-applications/limited-licence. If you qualify and require an LET, the limited license application, which includes applying for the LET, is accessible from this same link.
3. I was just wondering if anyone has given any thought to having a rating system (levels) for OACETT members. Such as having levels for low, medium, and high complexity jobs. I know we have junior, senior, RCCA designation for road construction, but I have noticed that not everyone is trained in the same manner and at the same knowledge level. If OACETT came up with a rating system based on experience and job value, it might improve the quality of certified members. For example, three levels for junior to graduate to a senior, then three levels to graduate to a RCCA, and account the projects' value, or have it geared for specific specialty fields. Road construction has three grades: concrete, asphalt, and structure, given that certified members would need to prove their field of focus, which would be listed on their cards. Additionally, what is OACETT doing to help newly certified members without Canadian education and work experience secure a job or volunteer position?

The Institute of Engineering Technology of Ontario (IETO) reviews Associate members’ experience to determine the level of complexity and judgment required. IETO also reviews the certification requirements routinely, and currently has a new committee, the Emerging Markets Committee, exploring specialized market experience, emerging technology trends, areas of practice, additional certifications, designations, and discipline industry relevance.
4. **What are the options of writing additional exams necessary to upgrade from a C.Tech. to a C.E.T.?**

Completing the academics that you are missing at a college is also an option instead of writing OACETT Technical Exams. We recommend working with the program coordinator at your local community college or looking for online options. We will review the course outline for you to ensure it meets the requirement of the missing academic competency.

5. **Why are three-year diploma courses, in any engineering discipline, from abroad not considered equivalent to similar courses completed in Canada for C.E.T. designation?**

Ontario college technologist programs are unique in the world, with many jurisdictions not offering an equivalent until the bachelor level. Nevertheless, programs are evaluated against the Ontario level, and we do not assume that they will not be equivalent based on the number of program years. They are evaluated based on the subjects and levels covered. Most international applicants are presenting with four-year programs, which are usually deemed equivalent. We have an excellent certification rate for our international applicants, and in some years, it has been higher than our domestic applicant certification rate.
6. Canadian work experience conditions for any certification level, in its current form, are difficult to fulfill. Are there any changes in the works?

Canadian work experience is not mandatory since OACETT introduced the International Professional Practice Exam (IEPPE) in 2016. Two years of relevant technician or technologist work experience in one's discipline, regardless of where it was obtained, is acceptable if the IEPPE is completed. The IEPPE has one additional section of content on legislation, professional practice, health and safety, and Canadian workplace culture than the regular PPE. Contact one of the Certification Coordinators at certify@oacett.org for further information or register for the exam through our website.

7. Is it possible to opt for a less costly Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) test instead of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) academic level to register as an internationally trained professional?

OACETT accepts the tests that are recognized and accepted as accurate and reliable. Unfortunately, OACETT cannot control the cost of these tests.
8. I would like to have my designation reclassified from C.Tech. to C.E.T. The primary requirement is to submit a technology report. Can it be replaced with Canadian work experience? For example, one or two years of Canadian work experience instead of submitting a Technology report?

Typically work experience does not fulfill the learning outcomes we are looking for from completion of the technology proposal and report, and therefore it cannot be replaced by work experience. The technology report may very well be the ultimate differentiator for the C.E.T. designation wherein you prove that: you can do the research, have the technical skills to carry out the project, the synthesis of thought and action, the ability to discern the outcome, recommendations, and the conclusion, and the communication and writing skills to bring it all together. It is where you demonstrate the full scope of what is required to hold the C.E.T. If you write reports for your employer, you may submit a proposal based on one completed for work, and the admissions committee will review it for technology report suitability.
9. Talking about certification for new Canadians, I think there's a requirement of english language proficiency that requires a written exam, either the International English Language Test (IELT) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). I feel this may be a barrier for potential members as they might have already proved their proficiency during the immigration process with Canada's Government.

It's unfortunate that the government does not require the same English proficiency level as the self-regulators and licensing bodies. This has been pointed out to various government agencies over the years and is doing a disservice to those who cannot pass the certification requirements. We require level 7, which is the requirement for many Ontario colleges and is our benchmark. We review the level needed on an annual basis.
We are presently unable to make a firm decision on whether or not in-person meetings will take place. As the Province enters stage 3 with particular exemptions, and a gradual reopening of the Province begins, there are still restrictions. As an organization, we will feel out of an abundance of caution that we continue to recommend all events stay virtual. OACETT is following federal and provincial recommendations when it comes to events. We will be surveying the membership to find out their comfort level with in-person meetings in the Fall, and these results will be shared with the Regional Councillors to pass off to the chapters.

2. Due to this tremendous crisis, I assume that many employees who have C.E.T. or C.Tech. designations are at risk of losing their jobs. Is there any help, assistance program, or rehabilitation resources to help these valuable members?

Absolutely! Please see our #OnwardTogether campaign page for more details: https://www.oacett.org/Membership/Onward_Together
3. Regarding the corporate outreach program, are we aiming at specific companies, or is this program taking action to encourage companies to value OACETT certification?

OACETT will be recruiting corporate partner members, including various levels of government, colleges, and community groups who are involved in the engineering technology and applied science community. Our goal is to get companies to understand the designations' value and what we do for the profession. We do have target companies we will initially approach to become 360 partners. Beyond that, we have an extensive database of our members' companies and will be approaching them in this Fall. Understanding the role OACETT certification plays in their company's success and making our designations commonplace in job postings is paramount to the strategic plan for the new corporate program.

4. Are there any continuing professional development (CPD) courses for retired members?

CPD options promoted to the OACETT membership since April are based on a survey we completed in February 2020. The list of CPD providers on the OACETT website has been selected based on meeting the program criteria and member demand. Retired members are more than welcome to attend any webinars or courses. Should there be particular CPD sessions geared towards retired members, we should be offering, please send your ideas to Julia Farner, Manager of Marketing and Communications at jfarner@oacett.org. We will be surveying retired members shortly to understand what we can improve to serve this membership segment better.
5. According to OACETT’S 2019 statement of operation, the revenue budget was $105,000. What has OACETT done to help promote members, so they have a competitive advantage in the employment market?

OACETT membership provides a variety of benefits from certification to continuing professional development, discounts on affinity offerings such as home and auto insurance, advocating for the engineering technology and applied science professions, the opportunity to network and volunteer through the chapters, job board access, etc.

Many companies hire members from the CTEN job board and recognize the importance of OACETT designations when hiring. Sites like Indeed and Workopolis list many jobs that ask for OACETT membership and designations. Further to this point, OACETT will be launching the new 360 partnership program in Fall 2020. OACETT is looking to recruit corporate partner members (including various levels of government, colleges, and community groups) who are involved in the engineering technology and applied science community. The goal of the partnership program is to educate companies on the value of OACETT designations, and inform them of what we do for the profession. Should you be interested in learning more, please contact Alex Miller, Manager, College & Corporate Partnerships at amiller@oacett.org.
1. Why are staff costs so high?

Salary surveys are completed every three to four years to ensure salaries are in-line with the market. All wages are in-line with the job titles and Toronto area market. Additionally, there were terminations of long-serving staff during the fiscal year that resulted in severance payouts.

2. $2.5 million for staff? How can OACETT afford that?

$2.5M was budgeted for 30 staff positions. OACETT budgets accordingly for all headcount positions taking into consideration strategic priorities that need to be carried out and staff required for day-to-day operations to service our over 25,000 members and 28 Chapters.

3. How can OACETT spend a lot on staff and not on chapters? Some chapters are not even providing snacks during meetings.

Chapter funding is provided annually to each Chapter, as determined by the Professional Affairs and Services (PAS) Board. Each chapter budgets for their activities in accordance with the guidelines.
4. **Thank you, but I hope that OACETT caters more to the membership.**

Servicing our membership is our top priority, as seen in our strategic plan and day-to-day operations.

5. **Have we discussed the possibility of buying office space with our reserve funds?**

No, we have not considered buying office space with reserve funds. Reserve funds are for strategic priorities and contingency. OACETT investigates all options upon renewal, and in the end, leasing premises was the most economical solution.

6. **If I'm not mistaken, isn't OACETT currently in a long-term lease?**

Yes, the current ten-year premise lease ends April 30, 2022.

7. **Members who have lost jobs may be eligible for reduced membership dues. We should follow what the auto insurance industry has been giving.**

We do assist members in this position and ask that they contact Finance at **416-621-9621 ext. 226 or 241.**
8. **Dragonfly: what additional funding and/or actions are needed to complete this important project?**

Prior to the project, we ensured there were enough reserves to fund the project. No additional funding needs to be undertaken to complete the Dragonfly project at this time. To date, the project is on budget, and payment milestones have been met for the build components. $1.1M of the up to $3.5M budget has been paid.

9. **Any comments on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database, valued at $1.1M, not used as noted in the financial statement by BDO?**

The CRM database reserve fund (intangible asset) of $1.1M has not been put in use as it is currently being built. Once this build is complete and we go live (scheduled for Fall 2020), this asset will be put in use, and amortization will begin.
Is consideration being given to allowing non-certified members to participate in future Annual General Meetings (AGM's) as guests? This would allow them to be better informed about the association and encourage them to work towards certification and foster the drive to volunteer at the chapter level.

Due to considerations regarding virtual platforms, voting security, and keeping costs low during the pandemic, we decided to keep registration to our certified members. Indeed, we would have preferred to allow all members to participate live, but we encourage all Associates to review the AGM recording. They are welcome to send in any questions they have to info@oacett.org and they will be addressed in a timely manner.