

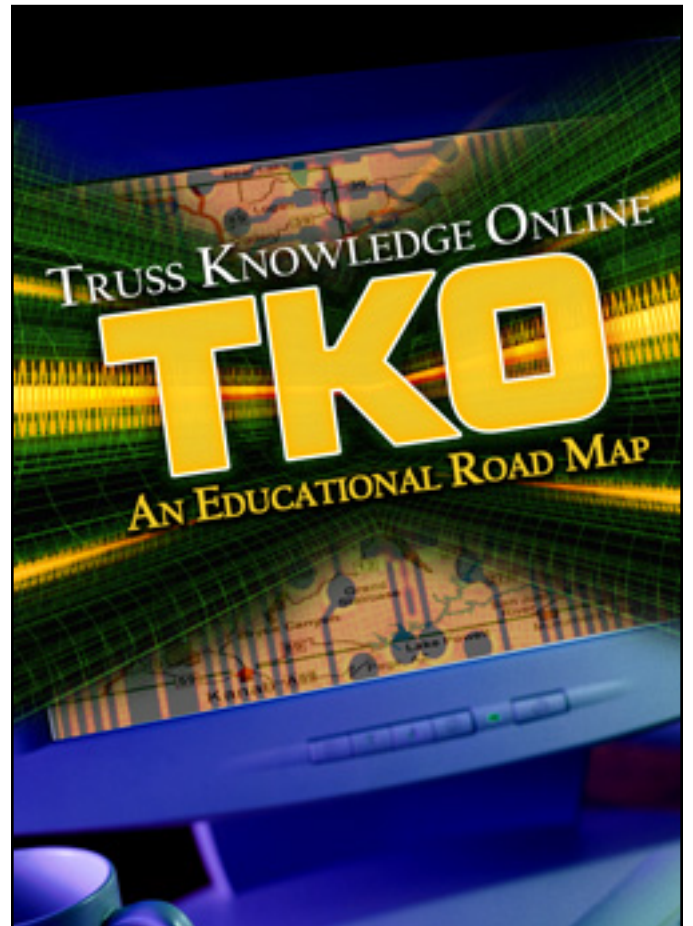
STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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TKO Training Paths: An Educational Roadmap for Design, Plant & General Managers by Libby Maurer

www.wtcatko.com

Put some direction into your training and education plan! Discover TKO's easy and economical training path for design, plant and general managers.



For individuals in middle to upper management, there is ample reason to be up-to-speed on all the factors associated with liability and risk to the company and its employees. This includes understanding and enforcement of proper plant safety, attention to quality control, and a firm grasp on the major risk management factors involved with running a component manufacturing operation.

This track appropriately begins with Truss Technician Training (TTT) Level III Online. This course provides discussion of current technical issues such as the ANSI/TPI 1-2002 standard and bracing, advanced design concepts, practical design, forensic engineering and fire performance concepts. In order to achieve Level III Certification, students must take the Level III Exam and pass by a

score of 60 percent or better. Managers are not subject to the technician pre-requisite of Level I or II certification.

In-house safety is another important topic for design, plant and general managers to be well-versed in. WTCA's Operations Safety Certification (OSC) is an in-plant safety program designed to supplement existing safety programs. Online modules for management aid in the training of plant personnel. Plant and general management can use tools for maintenance and evaluation of their in-house program. Plant and individual certifications are available with this program after a list of requirements are met. In addition to WTCA membership and purchasing the OSC program, plants must designate and certify a safety manager, and perform a plant assessment. The plant must also meet certain requirements to maintain certification, such as implementing a third party inspection program and filling out and entering quarterly checklists into the database. A beta group is currently testing the program. OSC officially launches July 1, 2004.

An employee in a design, plant or general manager position must be educated on contracts, the liabilities of conducting business and methods for minimizing exposure to loss. This is important especially since many lawsuits are ultimately avoidable and can cause irreparable damage to a business and the careers of everyone involved. WTCA Risk Management & Liability Avoidance Seminars, presented and developed by WTCA Legal Counsel Kent Pagel, are designed to alert management about the many lawsuits filed and the increasingly large judgments assessed against truss manufacturers and others in the construction industry.

One Risk Management Seminar attendee commented, "Excellent presentation by Kent Pagel. His 'real world' truss knowledge is very evident." Risk Management seminars are organized through WTCA Chapters on an as-needed basis. Stay tuned for Risk Management Online in the future.

The next step in the management training path is the In-Plant WTCA QC program and certification. The program was designed to help truss manufacturers monitor the quality of trusses they manufacture in order to comply with ANSI/TPI 1-2002. The program consists of two main parts: inspection procedures and use of software to manage inspection results and aid in manufacturing process improvements. Areas of inspection include: preliminary truss inspection, plate placement method, tooth count method, lumber inspection and truss dimensions. The data will help you manage quality outputs by crew and production line, perform long-term trend analysis for preventative maintenance and provide comparisons of in-plant inspections to your third-party inspections.

The benefits of being an In-Plant WTCA QC certified plant are manifold, and among the most crucial is your reduced overall risk. Some truss manufacturers and our approved insurance brokers have begun to negotiate lower insurance premiums due to their participation in programs like In-Plant WTCA QC, along with the use of jobsite packages, TTT certification and risk management seminar attendance.

Another benefit is reduced customer call-backs. Erwin Barney of Wadena Timber Roots (an affiliate of United Building Centers) witnessed the advantage of certification first-hand: "We are seeing a dramatic improvement in the number of claims from customers due to quality issues since we have started using In-Plant WTCA QC. In fact, between WTCA QC, the steps we have taken to clean up lumber inventory and improved training methods, claims due to quality-

related issues have really almost dropped off the radar screen.”

The Building Component Manufacturer’s Conference (BCMC) seminars round out the training path for design, production and general management. The BCMC seminars vary in length and topic, but are all geared toward component manufacturers and given by your peers who have great expertise. Seminars of particular interest to management students include: the Technical, Production, Insurance & Risk Management, and Personnel tracks.

Upon completion of this TKO Path, management will have TTT Level III Certification, the plant will be deemed Operations Safety Certified and well on its way to becoming In-plant WTCA QC Certified. They will also be more equipped to create a safe and healthy work environment, and will be able to identify hazards and risks that could add up to future liabilities or lawsuits for the company.

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