

PACIFIC LOGGING CONGRESS



ADOPT A HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

Since the last recession, the issue of finding and hiring qualified, experienced loggers has become more acute, and in some cases has limited our industry's ability to expand.

Additionally, most regions of North America don't offer a structured logging apprenticeship program that is designed to attract and teach young loggers the skills they need to begin a career in the woods.

As a solution, the Adopt a High School program was created — a guide designed to assist loggers, trucking contractors, mechanics and mills develop and retain local novice talent to become valued employees within their companies. It is a means for companies to take proactive steps to engage the available workforce, and position themselves for the future.



PROGRAM

The Adopt a High School program is designed to help loggers recruit, develop, and retain local novice talent. This self-directed toolbox provides contractors with new ways to present their business and their employment opportunities in a positive, professional image.

The program is simple and structured. It's designed to attract and teach young people, with vocational leanings, the skills needed to start a career in the woods.

The program allows companies to develop a clear understanding of their workflow and expectations.

OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR COMPANY

Instead of waiting for workers to come to you, Adopt a High School brings you and your company to the students and employees of tomorrow.

Your one-on-one involvement provides not only a future workforce, but also the opportunity to redefine any misunderstandings students have about the industry and the logging profession.

STEP 1



REACH OUT TO LOCAL EDUCATORS

Many students struggle with school and cling to electives like “shop” class. Helping to plant the seeds of career opportunities for these students can give them the goal to work toward. Encouraging other classes, such as math, can give them an understanding of why there is a need and purpose to work hard in these classes too! Make logging a goal — not a Plan B — if something else doesn't work out.

The first step is to develop relationships with your local educators and athletic coaches.

Many high schoolers, especially freshmen and sophomores, who haven't picked a career yet and don't want to attend college, will seek advice and guidance. Are they aware of your business? Do they know what skill set you are looking for?

Things to consider when determining who to reach out to:

- Would a coach know which kids have the drive to start early and work hard all day and can contribute to a team goal?
- Would a passion for welding or auto repair be an asset when repairs have to be made in the field?
- If students grew up in a rural community, used to hard work — taking care of animals, cutting firewood and daily chores— maybe they are a self-starter with the drive and desire to get ahead.
- Would the school administration support a vocational education program that awards credit for paid part-time interns working in the industry?
- Think of your plan as a multi-year investment (i.e. engaging freshmen and sophomores).

STEP 2

CREATE AWARENESS

Once you have determined who you will reach out to, the next step is open up communication.

First, create a short document (see example on the PFF and PLC websites) to have as a handout to help educators, coaches, and others understand what you are trying to achieve.

Next, offer a follow-up meeting with more details and to answer questions that will arise. Both educators and students will be interested to learn your perspective.

■ Tell your Story.

- How you got started in the community
- What opportunities arose to enable you to start your own business
- The milestones you have achieved along the way

■ Make a presentation to a club/class/team and profile your business.

- Compare logging jobs in general with other area jobs,
- Compare hours, benefits, and income potential,
- Discuss the various job roles on your crews and how they work together as a team,
- Discuss the need for everyone to think on their feet and work toward a goal,
- Discuss your safety program and your safety record,
- Show the required PPE, discuss your company safety protocols (every parent wants to know you have a safe working environment),
- Profile a career path and set realistic expectations. (Will there be upcoming retirements, opportunities to get into a machine?)
- Share the names of others in the community/area that already work with you.

■ Explain your drug and alcohol policy — why it's in place and who it protects.

■ Discuss the non-logging job roles within your business; truck driver, mechanic, bookkeeping, etc.

■ Explain how some foundational high school classes are applied every day in your business.

- Geometry — deflection and angles for cable setting in tower logging
- English and debate — communicating effectively with landowners, employers and timber companies.
- Math and accounting — establishing a budget, money management, long term planning.
- Problem solving and teamwork — you won't last long if you can't get along with people.

■ If the high school hosts an annual career day, attend and promote your company, your standing in the community and your support for the youth in your area.

- Create job shadowing opportunities.
- Give school counselors an updated company profile.
- Think of a creative way to use technology to demonstrate a facet of your company: Facebook, Twitter, drone footage, etc.

■ For those not interested in a future career in logging, don't pass up your opportunity to relay our message of sustainability from the point of view of the logger. We are on our third rotation/crop, 40-45 year average. Sustainable forest production is critical to providing important wood products and also protecting the forest from wildfire. A little education today may help them understand down the road in life.



Create interest Using New Technology

- Use a drone to do a video survey of your jobsite and describe all the phases of your operation.
- Demonstrate a mobile trucking app to show how many trucks left your landing so far today.
- Use a GoPro to show the decisions your processor operator must make with each log processed



- Invite the group to your shop when major repairs are to be performed or during break-up when your fleet is back home. Offer to pay the busing charge if required by the school.
- Invite the group to your active logging job. It's intriguing for people to see this for the first time. Cover your bases and do it right.
 - Start small - 10 to 12 students.
 - Be sure you have school administration approval.
 - Get signed parental permission slips for the event and for any photos that may be taken.
 - Make sure your crew knows the intent of the visit and supports your message.
 - Provide safety instructions and any required personal protection equipment (PPE).
 - Showcase the high level of teamwork that is involved in a modern logging operation.
- Many high schools in logging communities have logging sports teams or FFA clubs. Have you ever shared in joint activities with these clubs? A small investment of time or money may go a long way.
- Partner with your local equipment dealer and see if they have a machine simulator that could be brought into the classroom for the day.
- Update your website, Facebook and other social media platforms with information about your business for potential employees.
- If you feel you need a referral or would like additional support with your proposition, as a community business, ask the local Chamber of Commerce to join you with your initial visit to the school.

STEP 3

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

What are some things that the candidate can do to enhance their job prospects?

- Are they punctual?
- Do they have a valid driver's license?
 - No infractions is a demonstration of maturity and responsibility.
- Do they have a commercial driver's license (CDL)? (Post high school candidate only.)
- Are they first aid, CPR and AED certified?
- Have they learned to use the tools of the trade — cut firewood, rebuilt a car engine?
- Can they demonstrate that they have a natural work ethic?
 - Currently hold a part-time job?
 - Purchased their first car (versus a gift.)
- Do they have soft skills to work with a wide variety of people and backgrounds?
- Do they refrain from recreational drugs?*



** Because of the strict safety protocols within the forestry industry, drug use of any kind is not allowed. Passing pre-employment and random drug testing is often required to get and maintain a job.*

STEP 4

CREATE OPPORTUNITY

Create part-time job opportunities to evaluate the candidates. Examples include:

- Sweeping the shop floor every night after school
- Steam cleaning the equipment on Saturday
- Washing pickups and/or log trucks on the weekend
- Assisting mechanics or operators to service and grease equipment*
- Create job shadow opportunities*
- Ride-along opportunities with log truck/lowboy drivers
- Sponsor kids to spend a day with a forester, technician, landowner/manager, etc.
- Create opportunities for students under and over the age of 18
- Talk and listen to students' goals
- Mill tours to see how equipment is bilt and maintained.

**Provide safety support when working alone, and in the field, such as shadowing operators, mechanics, or crews.*

EXAMPLE – CREATING INCENTIVE

To obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), a student must log 160 hours "driving" with an instructor. This level of training at a commercial driving school would cost \$5,000. If the talent is present within your organization to provide this training, a significant employment incentive exists for any new hire or intern.



Disclaimer: As the employer, it is your responsibility to be knowledgeable of current state and federal employment laws and any required business insurance. Additional information may be found on the Department of Labor websites: <http://www.dol.gov/general/topic/youthlabor/>
DOL—Youth Rules: <http://www.youthrules.gov/>

STEP 5

WIN, WIN, WIN



Bring home the powerful message of apprenticeships!

The Profession of Logging

Discuss your intentions and explain how your proactive approach will create a win-win-win for the student, the school system, and for your business. Engage the school administrator, student counselor, any coaches, vocational ag instructors, forestry and FFA club lead. Stress the safety protocols that you have in place as well as your strategy for their development and training.

Schools Desire to Help All Their Students

The preparation and the professionalism you project when discussing the opportunities your business provides to your employees and your community at large, will set the tone during your conversations with the high school faculty and the students. Remember everyone wants to follow a true leader, especially when all share a common goal. Your participation in the process will allow the high school to bridge the gap between "Class and Career."

DON'T GIVE UP

If your message isn't received on the first attempt, wait a while and follow up. Sometimes there has to be a period of deliberation before an idea is embraced.

British Columbia's forest products sector:

- Supports over 140 communities in the province.
- Provides 61,000 direct labor jobs
- Contributes \$812 million in direct revenue to the province
- Plants over 200 million trees annually
- Is the key industry in 40% of BC's regional economies

50% of Washington State is forested.

- The current rate of harvest is only 1.1%
- The Forest Products sector is the 2nd largest in Washington state behind only transportation (including Boeing) at more than \$13 Billion.
- More than 45,000 workers are employed by the forest industry sector in WA.

Oregon's forest sector contributes:

- \$12.7 billion to Oregon's economy each year
- More than 58,000 living-wage jobs
- 6.8% of Oregon's total industrial output
- Millions of dollars in tourism annually

In California:

- The forest products sector generated \$4.4 billion in forest products wages
- The top forestry counties were Humboldt, Shasta, Siskiyou, Mendocino, and Plumas
- One-third of the state (33.2 million acres) is covered in timberland
- 1.7 billion board feet of lumber were produced

Consider your message; are you offering first-time employment or a vision of a life-long career in logging?

TIPS

Here are a few tips that could help you be even more successful.

Learn to sell your product or service.

- Create a brochure or fact sheet describing your business to educate new customers or draw interest and attract new employees.

Promote the health and longevity of our industry.

- Use industry data to demonstrate the financial contributions logging makes year after year to your state or province. (See some examples above.)
- Communicate that logging isn't a fad, bubble or a sunset industry. Logging has provided family-wage jobs for over 100 years.

- Demonstrate that logging jobs are sustainable and withstand the test of time.
- Let students know that if they enjoy hiking or hunting and fishing, a job in the forestry industry is for them.
- Provide them with the PLC and PFF websites: www.pacificloggingcongress.org and www.pacificforestfoundation.org.

Consider your message.

- Create a clear message. Are you offering first-time employment or a vision of a life-long career in logging?

Be Factual

- Establishing false expectations can do more harm than good.

