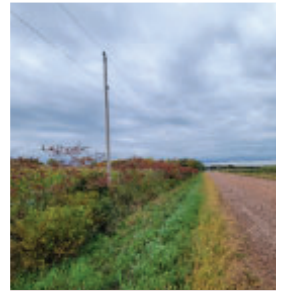


Skill Builders

2024 WECA Skill Builder Program



- Attend a wide range of education, training, and professional development courses designed specifically for cooperatives.
- Take advantage of NRECA certificate, certification, and accreditation programs.
- Network with other cooperative leaders, learn from their experiences, and shape the future of the cooperative movement.
- Enhance the effectiveness of member service in your cooperative.



Constructing the foundation of
successful cooperatives.

Credentialed Cooperative Director

The Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) curriculum demonstrates NRECA's commitment to directors, ensuring they have an opportunity to develop the competencies they need to succeed in a new and uncertain environment. The CCD certificate is awarded upon the successful completion of all five CCD courses in the curriculum. The three courses listed will be offered in the 2024 rotation. The remaining two will be offered in 2025.

Directors who have earned their CCD or Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) may audit courses they have already taken, at a 50 percent discount (if space permits). In order to receive the reduced rate, applicants must note this at the time of registration prior to attending the program.

DIRECTOR DUTIES AND LIABILITIES

Course 2600 (2 SB credits)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
February 13, 2024

Boards are responsible for directing the affairs of the corporation. This course discusses and explains the duties of loyalty, obedience, and due care, and the need for directors to acquire the minimum knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill their responsibilities within the cooperative context.

Key topics:

- An overview of today's multi-billion dollar electric utility business.
- The concepts and values that govern cooperatively owned businesses and related types of organizations.
- Legal and regulatory concepts affecting public utilities.
- Key legal documents such as articles of incorporation and bylaws.
- The role of management and guidelines for maintaining an effective relationship with the CEO.

All credits mentioned in this booklet refer to WECA Skill Builder (SB) credits, not NRECA program credits, unless otherwise noted.

Skill Builder credit charges in this booklet are based upon program costs available or estimated at the time of publication and could change.

BOARD OPERATIONS AND PROCESS

Course 2620 (2 SB credits)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
February 14, 2024

The board of directors is responsible for managing the affairs of the corporation. In fulfilling its duties, the board typically can only take official action via majority vote in a duly convened meeting. This course focuses on the legal requirements for holding board meetings and also on the human factors and group processes that make such meetings productive and effective.

Key topics:

- Identifying the individuals and groups with whom the board must maintain effective working relationships.
- Understanding, working with, and responding to members.
- How public officials and opinion leaders impact the cooperative and the board's role in building and maintaining effective relationships.
- Lessons and guidelines regarding key internal relationships: with the board chair, with the attorney, and within the cooperative.

FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKING

Course 2640 (2 SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
October 15, 2024

This course is designed to help directors assess their cooperative's financial position via financial statements used in financial reporting and planning, as well as key ratios developed from these financial statements. Participants will also recognize how board decisions impact their co-op's financial position.

Key topics:

- Identifying the key financial decisions boards make.
- Recognizing the uniqueness of the cooperative business model and a typical cooperative's financial attributes.
- Recognizing three financial documents and related key financial ratios.
- Explaining how board decisions impact the financial position and financial statements.
- Understanding the difference between reporting a cooperative's financial results and understanding a cooperative's financial position.
- Describing the audit function.

Board Leadership Certificate

The CCD Certificate is a prerequisite for the Board Leadership Certificate (BLC). However, directors do not need to have a CCD certificate in order to enroll in these courses. These courses are designed to be "challenger" workshops on key current issues. The BLC consists of a series of courses focusing in greater depth on specific industry and governance issues. These include issues such as risk management, power supply, parliamentary procedure, technology, and policy development. The BLC certificate is earned by completing a total of 10 NRECA course credits from the NRECA 900-level courses. Directors may attend BLC courses at any time, but the BLC will not be awarded until the CCD program requirements are completed.

MOVING THE FENCE: A GUIDE TO SHARED SERVICES, SYSTEM MERGERS, & TERRITORIAL ACQUISITIONS

Course 973.1 (1½ SB credits)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
January 9, 2024

Co-op service territory is generally viewed as static and unchanging, presenting few growth opportunities or scale for performance improvement. However, opportunities abound through cooperatives collaborating in "shared services" agreements, examining the advantages and benefits of merger or consolidation, partial territorial acquisition of an IOU, or completely purchasing and absorbing a municipal electric system. This course is designed to help directors navigate the pros and cons of each of these strategies.

Key topics:

- Identify potential shared-service opportunities, structures, and benefits.
- Understand and apply the board's role versus management's role in identifying and implementing shared service arrangements.
- Identify fundamental building blocks of a successful combination of two electric cooperatives.
- Understand key questions boards must discuss in contemplating a merger or consolidation, critical steps that must be taken in a merger or consolidation process, a proposed structured process, and essential outreach and communications with staff, employees, and members.
- Discuss tactics, strategies, and benefits of territorial acquisition and examine case studies of territorial acquisition.

ESG AND THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

Course 979.1 (1½ SB credits)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
January 10, 2024

Electric co-op boards are operating in what may be one of the most challenging business environments any generation of directors has ever known. Energy transition, member interest in Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Beneficial Electrification (BE) are three of the concepts that bring electric cooperatives challenges as well as opportunities. This course is designed to help directors navigate these and other concepts as electric co-ops fulfill the consumer-centric utility model.

Key topics:

- Define the concepts of energy transition, ESG, and Beneficial Electrification, from the board perspective.
- Recognize how each of these independently impacts electric cooperative board decision-making.
- Recognize the linkages between each of these concepts and how they might affect strategic decision-making in the board room.

RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

Course 901.1 (1¾ SB credits)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
March 21, 2024

This course provides an overview of what directors need to know about parliamentary procedure to become more effective participants in board meetings. Participants will understand the purpose and use of proper procedure in business meetings and become familiar with the basic structure and content of Robert's Rules of Order.

Key topics:

- How parliamentary procedure helps ensure effective, democratic meetings.
- The essential rules of debate.
- The key elements of agendas and minutes.
- Procedures for voting, elections, and secret ballots.

Board Leadership Certificate

ASSESSING GOVERNANCE: TAKING A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT APPROACH TO GOVERN YOUR CO-OP

Course 905.1 (1½ SB credits)

The Lodge at Mauston | Mauston
October 8, 2024

Putting a governance assessment on your board's to-do list may be a good idea. Similar to a board performance evaluation, a governance assessment is a thoughtful and thorough review of governance bylaws, policies, practices, and legal requirements. Doing this from time to time can help ensure that your co-op is keeping up with evolving member preferences and changes in the law. This course is designed to walk directors or boards through a governance assessment process.

Key topics:

- Recognizing the purpose and value of a governance assessment.
- Analyzing the benefits and risks of various governance practices using case studies and real world cooperative scenarios.
- Strategizing ways to implement the learning from the classroom to discussion and action in the boardroom.

CO-OP BYLAWS: GUIDING PRINCIPLES & CURRENT ISSUES

Course 925.1 (1½ SB credits)

The Lodge at Mauston | Mauston
October 9, 2024

The continuing evolution of the structure of the electric industry in the U.S. has brought about increased scrutiny by consumers and regulators. As a result, many electric cooperatives are being challenged to make sure their bylaws adequately address new situations including changing membership, "large load" exceptions to some state territorial laws, diversified services, distributed generation, and changes in some state or federal laws and regulations. This course will assist directors, CEOs, and agents of electric cooperatives in undertaking a comprehensive review of the co-op's bylaws and highlight the implications that these changes, issues, and challenges bring to bear in future bylaw revisions.

Key topics:

- Overview of the role of bylaws.
- Member issues and expectations.
- Director issues and expectations.
- Issues impacting co-op operations as not-for-profit corporations.
- Revising and amending bylaws.

NRECA Director Gold Credential

Director Gold is an addition to NRECA's Education Program, neither replacing nor altering any existing credential. Director Gold is the hallmark of directors who have earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) and Board Leadership Certificates (BLC) and are committed to continuing education throughout their board service.

Director Gold helps drive professional self-confidence and standing before members, regulators, and elected officials by identifying directors' ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.

For a director to earn the initial Director Gold Credential, he or she must meet these criteria:

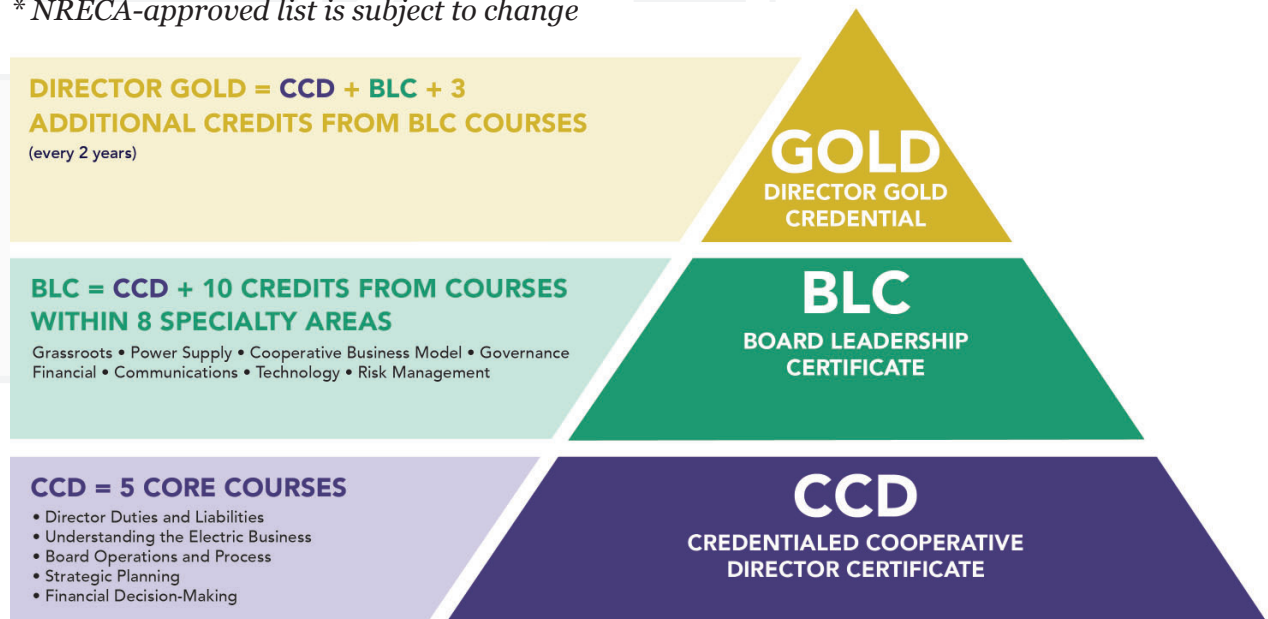
- Hold the CCD and BLC credentials.
- Earn three additional credits from the BLC series of courses. For the initial Director Gold Credential, only BLC courses will be accepted for credit. Upon renewal (every two years), other options including some non-NRECA programs are available.

A total of 13 BLC credits are needed to qualify for Director Gold status. Once eligible, a director must "opt in" by indicating interest in earning Director Gold status before a certificate will be issued. The opt in form can be completed at www.cooperative.com.

To maintain Director Gold status, directors must earn three (3) credits from the NRECA-approved list of continuing education programs within a two-year (24 month) period. A minimum of two NRECA credits must be earned from the NRECA BLC courses, but directors can choose to earn all three continuing education credits from the BLC series. A maximum of one credit may be earned by attending one of the following conferences or programs:

- NRECA Directors Conference (1 credit)
- CFC Forum (1 credit)
- CoBank Energy Directors Conference (1 credit)
- Mid America Cooperative Council (MACC) Board Chair Roundtable (1 credit)

** NRECA-approved list is subject to change*



Supervisor & Manager Development

The NRECA Supervisor and Manager Development Program (SMDP) is a flexible, co-op-specific education program focused on strengthening the leadership skills, knowledge and abilities needed to hire, develop and lead others, manage performance, communicate effectively and make decisions. The goal of this program is to equip co-op supervisors and managers with tools and resources to successfully lead and engage high-performing teams in support of the four mission-critical areas of safety, member satisfaction, reliability, and cost control.

BUILDING YOUR CO-OP'S CULTURE: THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

Course 715.1 (1¾ SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
October 16, 2024

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast," is a famous quote by the late business management guru Peter Drucker. All great organizations have great cultures, and great cultures are designed intentionally, not left to chance. Organizational culture is defined as a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that governs how people behave in organizations. This course addresses the steps supervisors can take to help build a culture where employees trust each other, hold themselves (and others) accountable, focus their efforts on the co-op's goals, and strive to continuously improve their processes.

Learning objectives:

- Explain the tremendous impact culture has on organizational effectiveness.
- Describe your co-op's culture and the purpose and values that the culture supports.
- Recognize the responsibility that supervisors have in supporting a positive culture.
- Adjust your leadership techniques to better align your team members with your co-op's purpose and values.
- Anticipate changing member needs at your co-op and discuss how your co-op's and your team's cultures can help meet these needs.

For more supervisor and manager training opportunities, please view our new Manager & Supervisor Development Program and/or Executive Leadership Development series training programs later in this booklet.

Cooperative Career Essentials Program

The Cooperative Career Essentials Program (CCEP) is a learning portfolio designed to provide the knowledge, skills, and abilities every co-op employee, regardless of role or tenure, needs to best serve their co-op and members.

Most employees are hired for specific job roles requiring specific hard skill sets. But every job role requires soft skills as well. They are often overlooked but play an important role in day-to-day cooperative business operations. Hard skills are teachable and measurable abilities, such as writing, reading, negotiating, or the ability to use technology. By contrast, soft skills are the traits that make you a good employee, such as communication and listening, adaptability, initiative, and getting along with other people. Both hard skills and soft skills are needed to be successful in the workplace.

CUSTOMER SERVICE ESSENTIALS

Course 5301.1 (1¾ SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
January 16, 2024

Excellent customer service is at the heart of the cooperative business. How an individual responds to a high-bill complaint, power outage, or rate increase can make the difference between a happy, loyal, and engaged member and one that is unsatisfied and discontent.

In this course, you will gain foundational knowledge, leverage proven techniques, and apply best practices that will help you increase consistency and professionalism needed to create positive impressions with every member interaction. With Customer Service Essentials you will learn how to communicate with members in a relatable, authentic, and professional way—in person, over the phone, and via email.

Learning objectives:

- Be aware of specific standards that are expected within each and every phone call, email communication and customer interaction, and how to achieve that standard.
- Learn how to productively resolve conflict using words and phrases that produce positivity and promote progress.
- Learn techniques to develop customer rapport and conversation control from the beginning.
- Guide a phone conversation or email communication from the start and stay in control, while ensuring that the customer's needs are not only met but exceeded.
- Learn purposeful use of communication tools: word choice, voice tone, body language, and proper email etiquette.
- Deliver a difficult message and move conversations forward productively while keeping the customer's receptivity and engagement intact.

Cooperative Career Essentials Program

EFFECTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING

Course 5130.05

(1¾ SB credits ~ combined with 5308.05 on next page)

Comfort Inn & Suites | Black River Falls
March 14, 2024 (morning session)

Do you ever feel like you spend all your days solving problems? Or listening to complaints? You are not alone. Some research suggests that we make approximately 35,000 decisions a day. This kind of ongoing demand on our brains creates stress. So, it's important to recognize and focus on the specific problems that have the biggest effect on your results...versus those that are merely annoying (but receive a lot of attention!).

Additionally, enabling those around you to make high-quality and sustainable decisions, fostering strong problem-solving capabilities, is a winning coaching strategy. In this workshop you will get clear and actionable ideas to strengthen this important business competency for you and your team. You'll walk away with tools to implement immediately while creating lasting results.

Learning objectives:

- Learn the difference between complaints, negativity, and problems.
- Understand how to foster strong critical thinking by eliminating biases and assumptions.
- Explore the value of using a structured process to coach others to high-quality problem-solving.
- Learn seven styles of decision-making and when to use each.

GETTING COMFORTABLE GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK

Course 5308.05

(1¾ SB credits ~ combined with 5130.05 on previous page)

Comfort Inn & Suites | Black River Falls

March 14, 2024 (afternoon session)

Sometimes talking is hard. Like when giving feedback. Or receiving it and knowing what to say in response. Yet feedback is essential to building strong, collaborative relationships and long-lasting, trusted partnerships. So, let's focus on mastering it. In this session, you'll gain confidence and competence to provide and receive feedback. We'll learn the most critical tips and techniques to master this essential competency.

Learning objectives:

- Understand a positive feedback mindset—why we need to reframe the value and impact of feedback.
- Avoid the three most common pitfalls of giving feedback poorly, resulting in defensiveness, confusion, or withdrawal.
- Receive feedback with composure and grace.
- Learn to process feedback from others, regardless of who's providing it, and how they're giving it.

NOTE: Both 5130.05 AND 5308.05 will be held on the same day. Course 5130.05 will be held in the morning and 5308.05 will be held in the afternoon. We are offering this "package" deal as a one-day training for 1¾ credits. We are not allowing this as an a la cart option of separate morning or afternoon program registrations.

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Other Courses and Events

OSHA 10-HOUR COURSE (2 SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
January 17–18, 2024

This OSHA 10-Hour General Industry course is specific to the electric utility sector. The training will incorporate OSHA power standards (1910.269). Since this course is tailored specifically for the electric power industry, it will include topics and content not found in typical OSHA 10-hour courses. Participants who complete the course will receive a certificate of completion as well as an OSHA pocket card. The course will be delivered by an OSHA Training Institute (OTI) instructor.

Program will run 9 a.m.–4:15 p.m. on Jan. 17 and 8 a.m.–12:15 p.m. on Jan. 18.

REASONABLE SUSPICION TRAINING (½ SB credit)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
January 18, 2024

Reasonable suspicion is a consistent tool and set of procedures to deter substance abuse, to protect workplace safety, and to identify employees who need help resolving problems associated with drug or alcohol abuse. The training provides awareness of the impacts drug and alcohol abuse can have in the workplace.

49CFR 382.603 is the applicable DOT regulation requiring supervisors of drivers who operate vehicles that require a commercial driver license to take 60 minutes of training on the symptoms of alcohol abuse and another 60 minutes of training on the symptoms of controlled substance use (120 minutes in total).

The purpose of this training is to teach supervisors to identify circumstances and indicators that may create reasonable suspicion that a driver is using or under the influence of alcohol or drugs, supporting referral of an employee for testing.

Program will be held immediately following the OSHA 10-Hour Course and will be held 1–3 p.m.

FINANCIAL WEBINAR SERIES *[FOR EMPLOYEES]*

(2½ SB credits per person for all 8 months
OR ½ SB credit per session per person a la carte)

90-Minute Webinar Series (9–10:30 a.m.)

January 23 ~ Connecting Spending to Ratemaking

February 21 ~ Operating/Variable Expense Deep Dive

March 19 ~ Financial Orientation Checklist

April 9 ~ Capital Credits

May 14 ~ Business Plan Essentials

August 14 ~ Plant Retirement and Reconciliation Strategies

October 22 ~ Impact of Industry Changes to Our Finances

December 10 ~ Utilizing Service Orders to Measure Metrics

Accounting and finance staff are invited to participate in the Financial Webinar Series. In these 90-minute virtual courses, participants will learn and strengthen skills to guide electric cooperatives to strong financial futures. All of the finance professionals webinar series programs will be recorded and available to all paid attendees.

****Each 90-minute webinar qualifies for 1.5 CPE credits** (you must participate online to receive CPE credits).

FINANCIAL WEBINAR SERIES *[FOR DIRECTORS]*

(1½ SB credits per person for all 6 webinars)

90-Minute Webinar Series (8:30–10 a.m.)

February 22 ~ Operating Costs and Operational Plans

April 11 ~ Capital Credits

June 13 ~ Business Plan Essentials

August 15 ~ Asset Purchases and the Balance Sheet

October 24 ~ Planning for Industry Changes and Future Advancement

December 12 ~ Debt Management and the Balance Sheet

WECA is offering a continuation of a custom financial program tailored to electric cooperative board members. This series of six webinars will go through topics such as operating costs and operational plans, capital credits, business plan essentials, asset purchases and the balance sheet, planning for industry changes and future advancement, and debt management and the balance sheet.

Other Courses and Events

EDUCATION AND LOBBY DAYS

(1¼ SB credits)

Concourse Hotel & Governor's Club | Madison
January 30–31, 2024

Cooperative directors and staff will be briefed on state issues affecting electric cooperatives and the energy industry. The two-day event will feature in-depth presentations, panel discussions with experts, verbal and written background information on legislative proposals, as well as insight into the political atmosphere at the Capitol.

NEW! COMPUTER SKILLS: PROFESSIONAL MICROSOFT EXCEL: CORE SKILLS

(½ SB credit per co-op for unlimited attendees*)

Webinar
February 6, 2024 (9–10 a.m.)

Professional Microsoft Excel: Core Skills

*We are offering this training to each co-op with unlimited attendees. BUT, we have a limit of 50 webinar connections, so recommend if your co-op has a group of two or more to watch the webinar together as a group.

Many business professionals have been thrust into using Excel daily without proper training. It turns out that there are a few simple rules that improve the functionality of every spreadsheet, and make your work easier to accomplish. In this session, we'll demonstrate how applying these fundamental principles change everything.

Topics include:

- Using lists and tables for effective data management.
- Adding selection and navigation shortcuts to your personal toolbox.
- Understanding the purpose and application of absolute and relative references.
- Leveraging table references in functions.
- Organizing a spreadsheet effectively.

ELECTRIC INDUSTRY UPDATES

(2 SB credits per co-op for unlimited attendees)

Webinars
February 8, 2024

Group 1 (morning) ~ 8–10 a.m.

Group 2 (afternoon) ~ 1:30–3:30 p.m.

We'll be offering two separate group sessions, with the same program held once in the morning and repeated in the afternoon. Co-ops may send their employees to one or both of the sessions, with the option of dividing staff members between the morning and afternoon sessions.

WECA LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

WECA VP of Government Relations & External Affairs Rob Richard will give participants a detailed look into state issues that the organization has tackled over the last year and will hope to accomplish in the current legislative session that directly impact how cooperatives perform their daily responsibility of providing safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to their consumer-members. Richard will break down the pros and cons of each issue and provide strategic insight into why WECA is involved, and why the issues matter to your cooperative.

THE GENERATIONS UNMASKED

Generational conflict and misunderstanding has been present for decades; however, the divide between each generation seems to get further apart. The Generations Unmasked identifies key influences, traits and characteristics of the predominant generations in the workforce, but more importantly strategies to help understand what makes each age cohort succeed and engage. No matter which generation you fit into, this session will be relevant, entertaining, and help you better understand your coworkers and individuals throughout your life.

Skill Builder credit charges in this booklet are based upon program costs available or estimated at the time of publication and could change.

Other Courses and Events

NEW! MANAGER AND SUPERVISOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (3½ SB credits/person for full series)

Part 1

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
February 13, 2024 (1½ SB credits/person if taken a la cart)

Part 2

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
August 6–7, 2024 (2½ SB credits/person if taken a la cart)

Development of our cooperative supervisors and managers is one of the BEST investments we can make that supports: Our desired culture at work; being an engaged team of employees and working well together; executing the mission, strategies, and plans of the cooperative; AND responding effectively when a storm or crisis comes our way. Bad bosses are one of the greatest frustrations of all employees. Common traits identified include lack of leadership, poor communication, lack of reinforcement, lack of honesty, taking credit for others' work, micromanaging, inability to make decisions, mishandling of mistakes, biases and friendships getting in the way, resistant to change, reactive to criticism.

Truth is, most of the time great supervisors and managers don't naturally have the skills and abilities needed without intentional development. Supervisors and managers are most often promoted into positions because they 1) have leadership attributes 2) have been a productive and knowledgeable employee on the team, or 3) they've been around the longest and are next up to advance. None of these are wrong reasons for someone becoming a supervisor or manager; however, these reasons don't guarantee success as a supervisor or manager. This series is designed to be specific and intentional to advance your success and respect in the role.

Topics Covered on February 13:

- Building Respect and Trust as a Supervisor/Manager
- Setting and Maintaining Performance Standards

Topics Covered on August 6–7:

- Aligning Teams to Strategy and Culture
- Operational Excellence
- Keeping People Engaged

These interactive sessions will provide a solid foundation for success. Attendees who sign up for the FULL series (both Feb. 13 and Aug. 6–7 programs) will also receive two individual coaching sessions to support individual development. There will be activities to be completed outside of the classroom setting, in addition to the in-person sessions.

Note: The August 6–7 program is 1½ days and ends at noon on the second day. See WECA events page for more detailed program descriptions.

CREDIT ISSUES AND COLLECTIONS WORKSHOP

(1½ SB credits)

Comfort Inn & Suites | Black River Falls
March 12, 2024

Our electric cooperatives are a critical hub of our communities as we serve homes, businesses, industries, and our communities. What we provide and do is important to the lives and livelihoods of our members. One of the cooperative principles is members' economic participation; in fact, we rely on each of our services paying their fair and equitable share of the costs through their monthly billing. And yet we know at any given time some of our members will be experiencing difficult challenges. As a cooperative, we are different in our care and concern for our member-owners and our community.

This workshop will provide and be a conduit for attendees to share resources, partners, assistance techniques, and services we can (and should!) provide our members, because they are the owners of the cooperative, and because it's the best and right thing to do. Additionally, this workshop will provide a foundational understanding of what goes into rates and will include easy and conversational ways for you to communicate rate information, even in the most challenging of situations. With a strong understanding of these concepts, you will experience some of the most rewarding scenarios in helping your member-owners through a difficult time.

What about the members who take advantage of being a member-owner and seem to expect the other members to carry their fair share, can't get out of a cycle of being behind in their payments, and are on the disconnect list almost monthly? These members may even be described as angry and disrespectful in their expectations of the services they receive from the cooperative. These situations are the most challenging for us as cooperative employees. In this workshop we will 1) discuss the importance of onboarding our member-owners in a way that helps them see the cooperative difference. You will be provided with examples of ways to do this at your cooperative. 2) learn proven practices that proactively support the challenges that go along with late payment situations, and 3) experience effective responses, processes, and procedures that support policies during difficult situations, AND support the needs of you as an employee.

Other Courses and Events

NEW! WORK ORDERS: BASICS IN A DAY (1½ SB credits)

Comfort Inn & Suites | Black River Falls
March 13, 2024

WHO SHOULD ATTEND: Any and every employee that has direct or indirect work responsibilities relating to work orders or any portion of the work order process from start to finish will benefit from attending. If you are new to a role or position at your cooperative, or new to the cooperative, this workshop is designed for you. Work Orders: Basics in a Day is perfect for all operations and engineering-related staff, line staff, crew leads, foreman, line superintendents, district supervisors, operations managers, staking, engineering, and work order coordinators, to name a few. GIS and mapping staff, warehousing and material related positions, plant accounting, accounting and finance staff, those who coordinate new services and members. Managers, administration, and leadership will all gain an overall understanding of the process.

Work Orders—Basics in a Day covers the topics of construction, retirement, and maintenance of your distribution system. This workshop details the components and requirements of a work order and the purpose and outcome of the overall work order process.

This workshop will provide an overall, big-picture understanding of the work order process. Additionally, we will dig into the areas of material, labor, and overheads, and HOW each works and the importance of knowing how they work.

Participants will gain an understanding of system maintenance (expenses) versus system/capital improvements (assets). Further, you will understand WHY it is important to know the difference and WHAT the impact is on our member-owners and the rates they ultimately pay.

Participants will follow the life of a work order from opening to closing and correlate the work that employees and contractors do within the process. Through an interactive process, participants will understand what happens to get a work order field ready, what occurs in the field, and finalizing a completed work order back in the office.

LEGAL UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS & EMPLOYEES

(1¼ SB credits)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
March 22, 2024

Each year's topics reflect the changing environment that electric cooperatives operate in. The Weld Riley S.C. and Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. law firms will be covering evolving legal issues pertinent to the decisions made by electric cooperative directors, managers/CEOs, and key staff.

Topics will be announced early 2024.

NEW! COMPUTER SKILLS: INFORMATION MANAGEMENT WITH MICROSOFT ONENOTE

(½ SB credit per co-op for unlimited attendees*)

Webinar

April 2, 2024 (9–10 a.m.)

Information Management with Microsoft OneNote

*We are offering this training to all members with unlimited attendees. BUT, we have a limit of 50 webinar connections, so recommend if your co-op has a group of two or more to watch the webinar together as a group.

OneNote is an essential application in the modern era. With a huge volume of information being sent to us every day, it is critical that we can process, organize, and resurface the information we need at a later date. OneNote provides a flexible, useful tool for that organization.

Topics include:

- Organizing ideas into notebooks, sections, and pages.
- Adding content from the web to a notebook.
- Integrating Outlook with your OneNote notebooks.
- Embedding notebooks into SharePoint and Teams.
- Sharing content with coworkers.

Skill Builder credit charges in this booklet are based upon program costs available or estimated at the time of publication and could change.

Other Courses and Events

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP (1 SB credit)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
April 3, 2024

This workshop will provide for new employees an introduction to a brief history of electric cooperatives, cooperative principles and structure, how electric cooperatives operate, cooperative finance, the role of the G&T in providing power, NRECA group and retirement benefits, and support organizations for local cooperatives.

Employees will also hear about various roles safety plays within electric cooperatives, with suggestions for participants to take back to their home co-ops. Topics will also include basic duties essential to all employees, focusing on general workplace safety and the well-being of the general public.

The New Employee Orientation is geared toward employees, but any directors interested in registering would be welcome.

ELECTRIC UTILITY FUNDAMENTALS FOR NON-OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

(3 SB credits)

Jump River Electric Cooperative | Ladysmith
April 9–10, 2024

Have you ever wondered how electricity works? Do you have a lot of questions about why your members call with "partial power," or "blinking lights," or high energy consumption complaints? Do you want to know more about what your lineworkers do on a daily basis and how you can keep them safe and productive while keeping system reliability in mind? Then join us for this extensive two-day training in Ladysmith specifically designed for WECA members.

During this two-day training, you will learn how electricity is generated, transmitted, distributed, consumed, measured, and billed. This extensive training will be a mixture of classroom with real-life lab videos (created by instructor) including high-voltage demonstrations (up to 12,750 volts) on what causes outages and injuries and how to prevent them. Time will be given for open discussions among employees from various co-ops to come up with best practices on how to efficiently operate and maintain your system, keeping member satisfaction at the forefront.

All participants will be given an easy-to-read 58-page color manual and a 16-page glossary of terms (both authored by your instructor, Bandi Henke) to take back with you for referencing all topics covered in the training for the rest of your career. Don't miss out on this jam-packed, high-energy training!

This program will be two (2) full days of training and attendees must commit to attending both days.

Skill Builder credit charges in this booklet are based upon program costs available or estimated at the time of publication and could change.

Other Courses and Events

NEW! EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SERIES (3¼ SB credits/person for full series)

Florian Gardens Conference Center | Eau Claire
April 16, 2024

AND

The Lodge in Mauston | Mauston
October 10, 2024

When senior leaders of the cooperative function effectively as a team, the organization thrives. We've all heard the phrase, "It starts at the top." When the team at the top of the organization establishes trust and accountability, alignment throughout the organization is likely. As senior leaders we need to be skilled at handling conflict, working with people we don't necessarily like, establishing strong communication, being creative, being flexible, managing change at the right pace, and supporting the needs of our employees and members using active listening.

This experience is designed for your cooperative leadership team to attend as a group. Although not required, your outcomes will benefit by attending together.

Having Difficult Discussions Around Performance

- Establishing trust, consistency, credibility, and respect.
- Measuring the cost of poor performance versus the challenge of having a difficult discussion.
- Leading and driving the desired culture, employee engagement and organizational productivity.
- Recognizing pros and cons of cooperative practices—past, present, and future. Determining what to let go of and what to hold tight to.

Developing Culture

- Assessing your current culture objectively.
- Working with your team to identify the characteristics of your ideal culture.
- Using assessment tools to measure your progress.
- Building culture-building vocabulary and skill sets using assessment data to drive relationships in groups and individuals.
- Making decisions and strategy choices that do not conflict with your culture.
- Strategies for changing the culture including changing individual behaviors.

~~ Executive Leadership series continued on next page ~~

NEW! EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SERIES *(cont.)*

Responding to Management Concerns in the Work Environment

- Establishing methods to identify and escalate issues appropriately.
- Giving managers the right amount of space to address issues without giving them too much space.
- Understanding when your management team needs you to be directive and when it needs you to be supportive.
- Looking for and detecting trends instead of managing by incident response.

The content and additional interactive experiences of this program will take place in person. In addition, each cooperative will be scheduled for two online coaching sessions (one-hour each), which will include additional activities for your team to complete for each of the sessions.

RETIREMENT PLANNING SEMINAR **(No Charge)***

Webinar (8 a.m.–4 p.m.)
April 18, 2024

The NRECA Retirement Planning Seminar is designed for employees and their spouses who are within 5–15 years of retirement. It helps employees evaluate distribution options from their retirement plans, estimate retirement income and expenses, and realize the need for continued investment during retirement years. Social Security and estate planning are included in the program. Health and long-term care issues are also addressed. This program will help employees to gauge if they are on the right track for their retirement years.

**This program will be held as a one-day webinar session. There will be no charges associated with this informational session.*

Other Courses and Events

EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE

(1½ SB credits)

The Lodge at Mauston | Mauston
May 21, 2024

Employment regulations change regularly in response to new laws or court decisions that sometimes alter enforcement or implementation expectations. Keeping up with these changes is essential to minimizing liability, strengthening negotiation positions, and ensuring employees maximize benefits available to them. Often these changes are complex and require a legal perspective to help human resource professionals better understand the implications of court decisions and revised or new regulations. This workshop also provides several venues to make sure questions are answered, and cross-sharing of implementation strategies among cooperative human resources and supervisor personnel.

Brian Goodman and Jennifer Mirus from Boardman & Clark LLP will be presenting this year's Employment Law Update.

HR PROFESSIONAL'S WORKSHOP

(1¾ SB credits)

The Lodge at Mauston | Mauston
May 22, 2024

Keep an eye out for a change-up in the format for this program in 2024. Teri Wallis will be presenting HR plan development and employee surveying sessions. We will also be bringing in the CEO from WECA Associate Member HRExpertiseBP to cover internal equity compensation. If time allows, we will build in a short roundtable.

Topics will include:

- HR Plan Development
- Employee Surveying
- Internal Equity Compensation

The HR Plan Development and Employee Surveying will be held in person and are the kick-off sessions for our new HR Webinar Series (see HR Webinar Series listing later in this booklet).

NEW! THE COOPERATIVE COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE (1¾ SB credits)

Holiday Inn & Suites | Wausau-Rothschild
June 4, 2024

The Cooperative Communication Experience training is an interactive, values-based, co-op-focused training geared toward building teams, empowering communication, leading through change, and improving the member experience. Led by 20-year co-op veteran Allyson McElroy, participants will leave with stick-with-you lessons and laugh-out-loud stories for not just the cooperative world, but also for life.

Intentional Experiences: When's the last time you walked in the shoes of your members? What does service feel like from their perspective and from your perspective? This introductory session will set the ground work for the entire day of humor, interaction, and leaning in to learning more.

The 4 Cs of Customer Service: Social media has given the word "competition" a whole new meaning. And "customers" are no longer just those who buy a product. Toss those old VHS training tapes out the door and let's discover what member service really is in the here & now.

Behind the Scenes: Customer Communication: Over 90% of communication has nothing to do with the words coming from our mouths. What's much more important than robotic words and phrases are the behind-the-scenes moments. Discover how tone, word choice, and delivery can make or break conversations and learn to turn each moment into a connection opportunity. This session is packed full of laughter and mic-drop moments that will have you "talking" for years to come.

FOCUS: Special Cases: Customer service and office communication shouldn't feel like an emotional boxing match. Certain situations and individuals require our FOCUS. This session gives real-life examples of how to handle and win over your most challenging customers, clients, and team members.

The DOTS of Visual Communication: Sure, you've heard communication, but have you ever seen it? This 100% hands-on session pairs an eye-opening, laughter-filled Communication Profile with an interactive, hilarious, and immersive communication experience. Participants will see where customer & in-office communication breaks down, where it succeeds, and where improvements can be made. Laugh and learn to be heard and to hear others.

CAPSTONE—Cooperative Journey Map: This communication-in-action session allows participants to take everything they've just experienced and apply it to real-life workplace examples. Together in groups participants will brainstorm issues that need to be repaired and determine what communication tools can be the hammer and nails. Companies have, quite literally, been changed for the better as a result of this session!

Other Courses and Events

NEW! CFC BUDGETPRO WORKSHOP (1¼ SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
June 11, 2024

CFC BudgetPro is an Excel-based tool, tailored for electric distribution cooperatives, to assist in creating a 12-month operating budget, including optional balance sheet, cash flow, and financial ratio projections. In this hands-on training, attendees will join CFC experts to learn how to prepare a budget, adjust forecast assumptions, model various scenarios, and interpret results.

The learning objectives for the workshop are to understand the purpose and capabilities of CFC BudgetPro model, learn about key model features and practical applications for cooperatives, confidently source relevant budget inputs like revenue, and generate charts and financial statements from the model.

Skill Builder credit charges in this booklet are based upon program costs available or estimated at the time of publication and could change.

NEW! COMPUTER SKILLS LAB

FILE TRIAGE: WORKING SMARTER, NOT HARDER AND UNDERSTANDING MICROSOFT 365 (1½ SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
June 12, 2024

File Triage: Working Smarter, Not Harder in Word, Excel, or PowerPoint

If you've ever spent hours—or perhaps days—'cleaning up' a document, spreadsheet, or presentation, this session is intended for you. There are incredible tools, tricks, and shortcuts in each of the major Office applications that can resolve complex problems in seconds, if you only know how to use them. In this session, we'll handle formatting, layout, and even the dreaded 'dirty data.'

Topics include:

- Using Styles and Style Sets to control Word formatting.
- Leveraging Section Breaks for document layout issues.
- Creating macros in Word to automate clean-up.
- Tackling problematic data with Flash Fill.
- Crushing exhausting requests with Power Query.
- Using Tables for automatic updating of data analysis.
- Controlling presentations with Slide Masters and Slide Layouts.
- Implementing a standard color scheme across the Office Suite.
- Converting exhaustive lists into engaging graphics.

Understanding Microsoft 365: An Overview of Teams, SharePoint, and OneDrive

In the modern environment, Microsoft has introduced a full cloud suite called Microsoft 365 to match our daily productivity needs. The first step is to understand how this suite was designed, and which applications should be used for specific scenarios. In this session, we help you understand how to leverage Microsoft 365 effectively.

Topics include:

- Understanding and creating Microsoft 365 Groups.
- Defining the use cases for Teams, SharePoint, and OneDrive.
- Leveraging the partnership between Teams, SharePoint, and OneDrive.
- Creating and integrating additional collaborative tools.

Note: This is an in-person, hands-on computer skills class. There is a limit of 25 attendees. Register early to secure your seat!

Other Courses and Events

NEW! HR WEBINAR SERIES

(1½ SB credits per person for all 3 webinars)

Webinars (1–3 p.m.)

August 15 ~ Compensation Plans

October 22 ~ Performance Management

December 12 ~ Training & Development Plans

Looking to elevate the HR function at your cooperative and adapt to the changing needs of the workforce? This NEW Series will discuss and support practical methods and concepts for experienced and new HR professionals. This series will support the HR function of the cooperative by: determining your HR philosophies, having effective policies and procedures, and using data to make decisions. Most importantly, the combination of these topics will support an engaged, people-centered culture that people enjoy working in, are productive and effective in, and support the execution of our mission in our communities.

Compensation Plans

- Defining a compensation philosophy.
- Understanding the cost/benefit of different forms of compensation.
- Calculating and communicating the true compensation value—not just hourly rate.
- Understanding the pros and cons to connecting compensation to performance.
- Budget planning for annual compensation needs.
- Determining how much compensation-related information to share and where.

Performance Management

- Developing a process that people will be willing to adopt.
- Aligning individual goals to department goals to corporate goals.
- Setting expectations for behaviors.
- Creating effective performance evaluation processes that are easy to use and administer.
- Understanding the benefits of formal and informal performance measures and the impact on culture.
- Reducing Performance Improvement Plans by increasing discussions about performance.

Training & Development Plans

- Analyzing department or organization-wide training needs through analysis.
- Prioritizing practice-focused development over theory-focused development.
- Designing effective orientation processes that welcome new employees.
- Planning and executing cross-training initiatives.
- Tracking and monitoring training and development plans.

WISCONSIN REC MEMBER SERVICES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

($\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 SB credit)

Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center | Stevens Point
August 27, 2024

This workshop explores different ways to better meet members' needs. Participants have the opportunity to keep current with relevant industry topics and trends, learn how the latest technology and software programs can be used to better serve members, and share ideas about various member programs and events.

The Wisconsin REC Member Services Association is a stand-alone group that independently determines workshop content for this annual conference.

COMMUNICATION POWER

($1\frac{1}{2}$ SB credits)

Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center | Stevens Point
August 28, 2024

Enhance co-op communications by brushing up on basic skills, learning new techniques, and utilizing the latest in technology. Communicators will also share ideas and maximize their use of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* magazine to effectively communicate with co-op members.

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Other Courses and Events

OFFICE SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL'S CONFERENCE (1½ SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
December 10, 2024

Today's workplace is more complex than ever before and the roles and expectations of support staff are constantly evolving and growing. They are continually asked to do more with less, stretch their skills to fill in gaps, and quickly respond to ever-changing demands and priorities.

Spend time with other support staff professionals in positions just like yours—sharing stories and trading tips with people who've been there, done that, and really understand how demanding your job can be.

NEW! UTILITY FINANCIAL BASICS (1½ SB credits)

Holiday Inn South | Eau Claire
December 11, 2024

Everyone has a role and responsibility to the success of the finances of your cooperative. During this workshop, we will use group activities based on your role (supervisor/manager, new employee, finance and accounting support role, leadership position) to show how the everyday tasks and documents you are responsible for fit into the overall finances.

Topics include:

- Entry level understanding of FERC accounting and what it does for the cooperative and the ratepayer.
- What supervisors and managers need to know about the finance, the budget, and basics about the financial statements.
- What entry-level finance and accounting positions need to know about the finances and why.
- What every new employee needs to know about the finances of the cooperative they are working for.

2024 Year at a Glance

January 9	Moving the Fence: A Guide to Shared Services... (BLC)
January 10	ESG and The Cooperative Difference (BLC)
January 16	Customer Service Essentials (CCEP)
January 17–18	OSHA 10-Hour Course
January 18	Reasonable Suspicion Training
January 30–31	Education & Lobby Days
February 8	Electric Industry Updates <i>webinars</i>
February 13	Director Duties & Liabilities (CCD)
February 13	Manager & Supervisor Development Program
February 14	Board Operations & Process (CCD)
March 12	Credit & Collections Workshop
March 13	Work Orders: Basics in a Day
March 14	Effective Problem-Solving & Decision-Making <u>AND</u> Getting Comfortable Giving & Receiving Feedback (CCEP)
March 21	Rules & Procedures for Effective Board Meetings (BLC)
March 22	Legal Updates for Directors & Employees
April 3	New Employee Orientation
April 9–10	Electric Utility Fundamentals for Non-Operations Personnel
April 16	Executive Leadership Development Series (part 1)
April 18	Retirement Planning Seminar <i>webinar</i>
May 21	Employment Law Update
May 22	HR Professionals Workshop
June 4	The Cooperative Communication Experience
June 11	CFC BudgetPro Workshop
June 12	File Triage and Understanding Microsoft 365 (computer lab)
August 6–7	Manager & Supervisor Development Program (part 2)
August 27	Wisconsin REC Member Services Association Conference
August 28	Communication Power
October 8	Assessing Governance: Taking a Continuous Improvement... (BLC)
October 9	Co-op Bylaws: Guiding Principles & Current Issues (BLC)
October 10	Executive Leadership Development Series (part 2)
October 15	Financial Decision-Making (CCD)
October 16	Building Your Co-op's Culture: The Supervisor's Role (SMDP)
December 10	Office Support Professional's Conference
December 11	Utility Financial Basics
Monthly	Various Financial, HR, and Computer Webinar Series

Non-Skill Builder Events

Electric Operations Conference & Expo

January 10–12, 2024

Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells

NRECA Youth Tour

June 15–22, 2024

Washington, D.C.

WECA Youth Leadership Conference

July 16–18, 2024

UW-Stout, Menomonie

WECA District Meetings

District 1 ~ July 8, 2024 ~ Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative

District 2 ~ July 9, 2024 ~ Riverland Energy Cooperative

District 3 ~ July 10, 2024 ~ Barron Electric Cooperative

District 4 ~ July 11, 2024 ~ Clark Electric Cooperative

Fall REC Superintendent's Conference

September 19–20, 2024

Radisson Hotel & La Crosse Convention Center, La Crosse

WECA Annual Meeting

November 12–13, 2024

Glacier Canyon Lodge & Wilderness Resort, Wisconsin Dells



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