



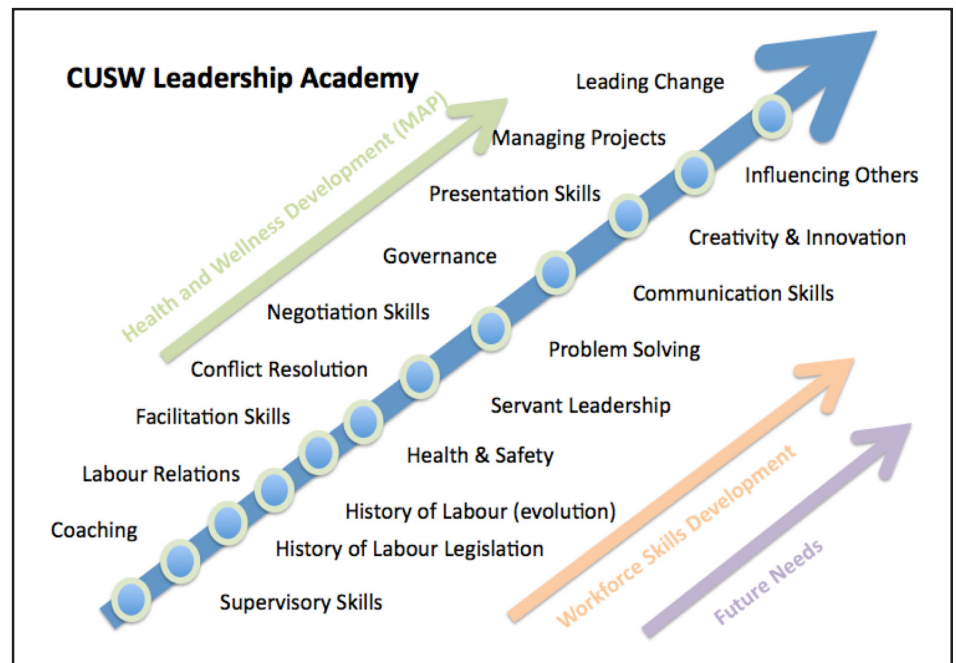
Share some 21st Century Insights
with Joe Mulhall

The 20-20 Knowledge Worker

Setting the stage for the 20-20 Worker in the 21st Century

When CUSW was established in 1999 a group of 20 members from across the Union were asked by the National Executive Board to come together in Hamilton Ontario and build a Plan that would support the development of the Knowledge Worker concept. With the assistance of a Facilitator, the group charted the steps forward that would set the stage for the future of Education and Training within our Union.

The first step in heading down the path was to set up a Training Trust Fund. The first Trust Agreement was officially signed in January 2001 between the Canadian Union of Skilled Workers and the Training Trustees appointed through the CUSW Constitution. The Trust Document provided the legal framework for the Union to receive contributions from employers, governments or government agencies for education and training purposes as the Trustees may from time to time approve. To coordinate the delivery of the education and training areas identified by the group in Ham-



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ilton the NEB also appointed the National Training and Education Committee.

The next stage was to roll out the vision of a skilled workforce that 21st Century Employers would want to engage with in building the future for their companies. We clearly understood

that the 20th Century scientific management systems where management created the work methods and workers carried out the work under the direction of management could not survive in the New Economy. The future for CUSW members would be dependent on the skills that they could bring to the workplace and not on their ability to take direction. Workers would need to be innovators and not just as a part of the mass production model.

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Implementing our vision would prove to be a challenge. Most of the companies that we had long-term collective bargaining relationships with were 20th Century style employers that had little or no interest in changing their approach to worker involvement. We also found that many of the workers at these companies had accepted the managed workplace style and resisted the change as well. It soon became clear that to participate in the new economy we would need to seek out Employers to work with that were not shackled by old thinking. We also realized the need to provide the members with the tools to make the transition.

The CUSW Constitution and the Training Trust Agreement provide the forum for the NEB, the Trustees and the NTEC to all come together to design, fund and build the Education and Training Programme that we as members will need to participate as 20-20 workers. “Take the LEAD” was designed back in 2007 to support members in designing an individual action plan to build the skills that will help them participate in CUSW and in the workplace. In 2013 the NEB added the term CUSW Leadership Academy to the tool box of assets that we have built over the past 13 years. The concept of the Leadership Academy provides each member with a profile of education options to tap into that will contribute to their personal development. Identifying and delivering skills training is more elusive and required a different approach.

When the Training Trust Agreement was drafted it was understood that Employers in the 21st Century would have very different business interests and

that the skill sets needed to respond to the new opportunities would vary from employer to employer. The identification of the skill sets that our members will need to work in these industries must include the employers that are relying on us to make them a success. The concept of developing bargaining unit level Education and Training Participation Agreements was included in the original Trust document and is only now getting implemented.

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The Participation Agreements provide the members of each bargaining unit with the opportunity to sit down with their Employers and design an Education and Training Plan that will respond to their individual needs as they innovate and expand their business. These workplace level skill requirements become part of the Education and Training Programme. All members of the Union are then able to see industry trends as they are unfolding and access the training that they will need to work in their chosen industry.

When we set out to build CUSW we set out to build a 21st Century Union. Through Education and Training we can participate in the decision making that will ensure that we are included in the operation of the workplace. That first meeting in Hamilton back in 1999 served us well in setting a vision of worker autonomy and charting the course to becoming a 21st Century Union. It is up to all of us to take it from here.

– Joe Mulhall