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The general shortfall of resources in the area of operations, maintenance and engineering is due to a combination of factors. They include: resource consumption by emerging markets; an aging workforce; the attractiveness of other job areas in industry for the younger generation; and a reliance on the limited experts available for these jobs. We believe several things can be done to attract new talent and retain existing talent so that these job areas are resourced with the right skills.

While the content of operations, maintenance and engineering roles remains the same, the way these jobs are executed has changed dramatically over the years. We must recognize that there is a higher degree of sophistication in terms of automation, innovative methods and techniques and use of technology than in the past. Consequently, we need to package and present such jobs to make them more appealing for young engineers and technicians and encourage them to become engaged with the necessary skills.

Another key step involves the defining of career paths to make these roles attractive. Candidates want well-paying jobs—*with growth potential*—that prepare them for cross-functional activities. We have to market these elements. It's also important for companies to work closely with universities and technical schools on this particular aspect of the industry. It has been my experience that early engagement with educational institutions always helps in shaping programs to produce the required skill sets that we seek in candidates.

Since one of the major reasons for the erosion of technical skills is an aging workforce—*coupled with a lack of replenishment when workers retire*—it's critical for organizations to develop a structured and focused plan of know-how to transfer to the next generation. Although an operation might have limited available resources, making time for such a transfer is crucial.

Siemens has a clear focus on talent retention and skill development. Therefore, many of the topics mentioned above are actively carried out within our operations. We put substantial emphasis on training at all levels—*from the service technician to the engineering manager*—and we are constantly developing job skills in new individuals, knowing they will reach a level of proficiency over time. We utilize dedicated in-house training academies, and we recruit heavily from universities and technical institutions. We emphasize career development and growth within our company and develop plans to ensure our employees' success.

The growing shortage of technical skills and knowledge will not disappear overnight—*and we still have to continue serving industry. Siemens tends to use the resources of its diverse businesses across the board so that the cyclical nature of many of the businesses can help in alleviating some of these issues.*
We work diligently with end-users to understand their resource requirements for keeping their operations running. To that end, we often embed our engineers in customers' plants on a long-term basis to help maintain uptime. Thus, we are staying as close to our customers as possible to be aware of their needs. Furthermore, we continue to build dedicated service organizations with the sole purpose of addressing customers' requirements in their operations. **MT**

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