

Case Study

Kansas City Power & Light



TeacherTech was like a gift that fell right in our lap.

A Powerful Plan

Preparing Students Today for Tomorrow's Workforce

Challenge

With an aging workforce and an increasing demand for electric energy, the power industry soon could be facing a new kind of energy challenge: supplying the growing demand for skilled-craft and technical workers. So, throughout the country, industry leaders are exploring ways to raise public awareness about career opportunities in these fields and, ultimately, increase the pool of qualified candidates to fill the positions.

Locally, Kansas City Power & Light (KCP&L) (where the average employee age is 46) is investing significant resources into initiatives that will address these issues and help meet future workforce demands. One initiative is Future Force, a job-readiness partnership with the Kansas City, Missouri School District designed to develop and prepare diverse students for skilled-craft and technical positions within the industry.



From left: KCP&L Supervisor Rita Boyd and TeacherTech Extern Ron Robinson

Solution

Through TeacherTech, KCP&L identified and hired Ron Robinson, a high school teacher in the Kansas City, Missouri School District, to help develop the Future Force pilot program.

"We had the program framework in place, but our team needed the perspective of a teacher to help us identify the greatest challenges and opportunities in preparing students for a variety of careers in the electric utility industry," said Rita Boyd, Strategic Sourcing Manager at KCP&L.

"TeacherTech was like a gift that fell right in our lap," she said. "It provided a direct channel for us to get the word out about our externship opportunity and made the search process so simple—all we had to do was develop the job description."

During his eight-week externship, Robinson identified some baseline competencies that must be introduced in middle and high school in order to prepare students for careers in the electric utility industry and made recommendations on what KCP&L can do to help students master technical and applied academic skills. Robinson also developed a white paper to provide structure around the goals, objectives and deliverables of the program.

"Ron's expertise has been critical to helping us pilot this program," Boyd said. "Not only will KCP&L benefit from having qualified candidates for future skilled-craft and technical positions, but Future Force students also benefit by being equipped with career knowledge that will help them obtain and succeed in their future work."

