

Energy enables practically everything we do, every day. From powering our smart devices to heating our homes, energy is a precious commodity. Energy comes from many different natural sources: natural gas, coal, uranium, water, sun and wind. Transforming them into energy and safely delivering that energy to homes and businesses require many types of skills. If you are thinking about pursuing a career in the energy industry, it's helpful to understand what energy contractors need in terms of skills and competencies. While training and knowledge requirements vary depending on the nature and complexity of the job, foundational competencies are fairly consistent across the industry.

What is competency? It's the ability to repeatedly do something with success and efficiency, regardless of condition or circumstance.

The Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD) worked with its industry members to create an Energy Contractor Competency Model that defines competencies in eight tiers: The first three tiers address the foundational competencies of Personal Effectiveness, Academic and Workplace. While some newly hired employees may not be able to demonstrate every competency listed below, collective mastery over time puts employees on a pathway to success in many energy jobs.

Tier 1: Personal Effectiveness Competencies:

- Works effectively one-on-one and in teams
- Treats people fairly and respectfully
- Acts professionally, demonstrating self-control and composure
- Is honest, ethical, law-abiding and drug-free
- Completes work assignments safely, accurately and completely
- Is reliable and dependable
- Understands and complies with rules and policies
- Demonstrates a desire and ability to learn and grow
- Adapts effectively and quickly to changing requirements or assignments

Tier 2: Academic Competencies:

- Uses mathematical concepts and equations to solve problems
- Is able to read, understand and interpret written information
- Is able to write, understand and speak standard English
- Demonstrates understanding of appropriate engineering and technology concepts
- Understands and uses scientific rules and methods to solve work problems
- Applies basic IT skills to maximize personal efficiency and work flow
- Uses logical thought processes to analyze information and draw conclusions

Tier 3: Workplace Competencies:

- Understands how individual job duties contribute to company goals and operations
- Works effectively in a team environment with co-workers and supervisors
- Accepts, understands and completes work assignments with minimal supervision
- Is able to work effectively within a schedule using correct procedures

Competencies for Success in the Energy Industry

- Anticipates potential issues and applies appropriate problem-solving and critical thinking skills
- Practices ethical behavior and understands consequences of unethical or illegal behavior
- Demonstrates positive work behavior
- Maintains any industry-required credentials
- Ability to meet or exceed **customer** service needs and expectations

Education and Training

Mastery of foundational competencies is necessary but not sufficient to be successful in the energy industry. CEWD's Competency Model also details competencies specific to the industry and specific to particular occupations within the industry.

To learn more about the competencies required for specific energy jobs, visit www.getintoenergy.com for detailed information about job requirements, salary ranges and where to find education and training for energy jobs through the [CEWD Training Provider Locator](#).

Some jobs in the energy industry require applicants to pass one or more pre-employment tests provided by the Edison Electric Institute. CEWD provides materials and tools to prepare for pre-employment testing at: <http://getintoenergy.com/getting-started/>

A Final Thought

Being happily employed in the energy industry is as much about what you **like** as it is about what you **know**. A career in energy may be right for you if:

- ✓ You like to know how things work on a practical level.
- ✓ You like to work with your hands.
- ✓ You like being outdoors or in a plant environment.
- ✓ You want a job that helps people.
- ✓ You work well under pressure.

Still not sure if an energy job is right for you? Take CEWD's [Energy Career Quiz!](#)