



INTRODUCTION

ScottMadden has worked for more than 30 years with an American energy and regional gas company that serves nine million electric and gas utility customers. The company's brands are known for energy innovation, excellent customer service, high reliability, and retail electric prices that are below the national average. Due to a strong history of successful partnerships, the client asked ScottMadden to assess and make recommendations to improve the talent retention and recruitment of its Instrumentation and Controls (I&C) professionals.

I&C professionals maintain plant control systems to ensure safe and efficient generation of power, a critical function for a power company. A research survey, conducted by ScottMadden, of peer organizations uncovered that I&C engineers and specialists are among the most difficult to recruit and retain within a utility organization. The challenges the company was facing for I&C candidates, including career progression, compensation, and development, are present throughout the utility industry.

After thorough analysis, ScottMadden recommended the creation of a more efficient workforce development and talent management program that would assist the client in its immediate and long-term goals to retain talent.

THE CHALLENGE

The client maintains an industry-leading commitment to providing clean, safe, and reliable energy across the country. Although the company is an innovative leader in the utility industry, it is not immune to talent management challenges. Over the past decade, the industry has experienced complications in hiring and retaining I&C talent because of limited career advancement opportunities, internal equity challenges, and inconsistent employee development practices.

The company was aware of its hiring challenges and proactively established I&C academies at local community colleges to promote I&C careers. Although a step in the right direction, the academies were only focused on recruiting new candidates, not training existing I&C employees. The company needed assistance with diagnosing problem areas across its I&C talent management cycle.

HOW WE HELPED

ScottMadden assigned a team of focused, human capital management experts to conduct a talent management assessment based on our proven framework. We assessed the current I&C landscape, both at the company and across the broader utility industry. Based on our data and findings, improvement opportunities were identified, recommendations developed, and an actionable plan was constructed.

ScottMadden's assessment discovered variations in I&C job responsibilities across divisions. These variations created discrepancies in job role identification and confusion surrounding career progression opportunities. Inconsistencies in job titles, job family structures, and tenure definitions also contributed to the problem. Incentive practices created internal equity issues, and leader salary maximums were below non-exempt technician compensation because of overtime payments. Finally, training and career development opportunities were inconsistent across the I&C organization. ScottMadden's talent management assessment diagnosed root causes and made concrete recommendations for improvement.

The talent management assessment was completed in four phases:

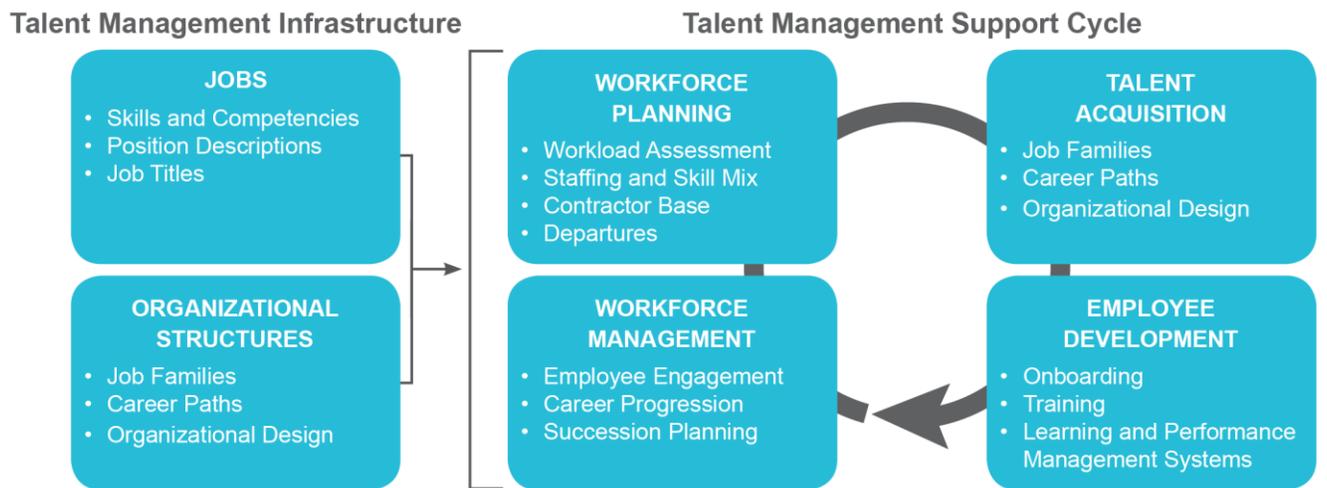
- **Phase 1:** Planned project, which included a scope kickoff meeting to finalize approach and define milestones, gather current data, and identify project participants
- **Phase 2:** Conducted a thorough operational assessment and evaluation of the company I&C talent management program. An external I&C survey was also deployed to better understand challenges across the industry. ScottMadden combined survey results with benchmarking data to develop a complete picture of management processes, I&C staff feedback, and external practices
- **Phase 3:** Identified opportunities for improvement. By comparing all critical findings and data points, ScottMadden provided strategic recommendations for improvement within talent acquisition, employee development, workforce management, and workforce planning
- **Phase 4:** Delivered a detailed implementation plan that provided initial "quick wins" and long-term actionable recommendations. The plan provided a clear view of enablers for proposed changes, resources for each recommendation, and detailed timing

ScottMadden's sophisticated Talent Management Assessment enables clients to:

- Integrate and strategically align your talent cycle
- Develop competency-based performance reviews
- Identify and correct technology constraints and issues
- Utilize performance data more effectively
- Develop focused career paths and connect them to credentialed training and certification
- Eliminate gaps in succession planning throughout the organization
- Help revitalize leadership commitment to developing new talent
- Correct management weaknesses that leave employees "feeling missed"

ScottMadden used the framework illustrated below to build out the future state recommendations for the client.

Figure 1: ScottMadden’s Talent Management Framework



Each recommended improvement opportunity included a detailed strategy and action plan outlining clear steps for implementation. Some key improvement opportunities included:

- Deliberate workforce planning to ensure appropriate staffing and planning for upcoming departures, skill needs, and plant initiatives
- Increased focus on sourcing, pre-screening, and pre-boarding in talent acquisition processes
- Added structure and regularity in employee development opportunities from onboarding to training to continuous feedback
- Consistent and clear workforce management practices, including job descriptions, organizational structures, job families, career paths, and incentives

RESULTS

ScottMadden delivered a valuable set of actionable results, which helped the client improve retention of its I&C professionals. The outcomes of this work included:

- Improved consistency in job descriptions and roles
- Clarified employee expectations and work procedures
- Refined structure around career development opportunities (e.g., certifications)
- Increased standardization of incentives across divisions (e.g., all I&C staff receive mileage payments when being called back to plants)

- Clearly defined career paths and advancement opportunities for employee retention and growth

To learn more about how ScottMadden can help your organization recruit and retain the most talented workforce, contact us today at info@scottmadden.com.

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