

My Experience at AAR Summa – Cullman Bama Turner

I truly enjoyed my experience during the Cullman Area Workforce Solution Teacher Exchange, with Summa as my host industry. During my week in this industry, I have gained so much information to carry back to the classroom. The people from Summa were so welcoming. I almost felt that I was to report to work even after my week long experience had ended.

I began my first day by watching a video of the product, containerized roll-in/out platforms (CROP), that Summa produced and the processes that are used to carry this product from start to finish. The CROP is a rolling flat-rack platform that is used by the military to transport and deliver supplies and equipment across the country. By the time I finished the video, I knew my week would be full of exciting learning opportunities. Ms. Brannon prepared a flexible schedule for Mr. McCollum and I to follow so that we will get the most out of our visit. After looking over the schedule, I got see how many departments were housed under one roof.

Geared with my steel-toed shoes and safety glasses, I had my first walk throughout the entire plant. There was so much to see. As the crops were being built, each worker had a specific job to perform. In most areas, the employees worked as a group or team. In one situation, the group did not use very much oral communication but you could tell by observing that they all knew their jobs and the jobs of their co-workers. In many departments, the employees worked in unison with each other – almost like someone had choreographed their movement. The employees on the floor had hot and physically exhausting jobs but I never head anyone complain about their job.

I was amazed at the amount of paperwork that went into the whole process. The employees must be extremely organized. They seemed to have the skill of organization down to an art. Each CROP that rolled off of the assembly line had a number welded into the CROP itself. Each CROP had a packet of paperwork that accompanied it throughout the entire building process. Each employee that does any work on the CROP must use their personal numbered stamp to indicate that they had a part of the building. If there should be a problem, the supervisors can trace back to the exact person and date where the error was made.

I was especially inspired by a young man who was so energetic about his position at Summa. This young man was only 21 but he sure has high expectation and goals for himself. He was the certified weld inspector and he was responsible for the welder by making sure their certifications were maintained.

As I talked with the people in each department, I asked about the skills that our students need to know to complete their jobs. I know that my students need computer, problem solving, and basic math skills and they need to have the ability to read scaled – such as rulers. Many of these competencies are addressed in the 8th grade but I now know that I need to spend a little more time on these skills. Communication is another key component that everyone needs. Communication was important, as I witnessed while sitting in on manager's meeting and weekly department meetings. I saw how information that was discussed at the manager's meeting trickled down to the hourly employees through the Thursday department meetings.

I would like to thank AAR Summa and C.A.W.S. for giving me the chance to see the skills that are needed as my students enter the workforce. I really appreciate the time and attention that was given to me during my stay at Summa.