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T H E **J O B** C E N T E R

ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN



Electronic technicians diagnose malfunctioning equipment and make repairs to electronic systems.

Many aspects of our modern lives are dependent on electronic equipment. Electronic technicians are called upon to install and repair devices ranging from simple telecommunication to complex industrial equipment.

Electrical systems provide power for machines to operate, but many rely on electronic components to control the machine's operation. In a manufacturing environment, such as an assembly plant, robotic equipment is often used to complete repetitive tasks. Robotic machines and other types of production equipment are controlled by electronic sensors and a programmable logic control (PLC). The machine's PLC reads messages sent by the sensors or other controls and adjusts the machine's speed or performance. If the electronic components fail, an electronic technician is called upon to service the machine.

Electronic technicians known as field technicians move between manufacturing sites or other areas to repair equipment on site. Their job is to diagnose the problem, to identify what may have caused the malfunction. They use diagnostic tools such as multimeters to measure voltage (electrical flow) through the machine. They also rely on computer software programs that help them run efficient diagnostic tests. If the problem is easily repaired, they use hand tools such as screwdrivers, wrenches and soldering irons to fix loose connections or to replace defective parts.

If the machine's malfunction can't be identified or if

repairs cannot be done on site, the field technician removes the electronic control system and sends it to a repair shop. Electronic technicians who work in service centers are known as bench technicians. Their work area may be in the manufacturing sites but out of the production area. Also, a bench technician may work in a repair shop at another location.

Bench technicians have more diagnostic and repair equipment than field technicians because they don't need to work in a crowded production area. They also have more time to assess problems and to make complex repairs or to insert new parts like circuit boards or transistors. Field technicians are focused on getting the manufacturer back to work as quickly as possible. They often remove faulty parts and install new ones, leaving time-consuming repairs for the bench technicians. To keep production running smoothly, field technicians also have the job of performing routine maintenance to avoid breakdowns and stops in production.

SKILLS REQUIRED

Good math skills are essential to electronic technicians. They also need to be excellent problem solvers who can develop a strong knowledge of electrical principles.

WHERE/HOW TO GET TRAINING

Schooling

Employers prefer to hire applicants who have completed some training in electronics at a technical school, community college or through military service. Many technical and community colleges offer programs that require six months to two years of study toward a certificate, diploma or an associate degree. Certification is also recommended for advancement in the field. The Society of Certified Electronics Technicians International offers entry-level testing for those with fewer than four years of experience to become an associate Certified Electronics Technician (CET) offered at MTI. After passing the associate's exam and completing four years of training or experience, you can test to become a journeyman level CET, which requires passing a test over a specific area of electronics.

The Association of Communications and Electronic

Schools also offers certification for those who complete at least two years of training at a member school. The ACES' Certified Professional Electronics Technician (CPET) exam includes written and hands-on testing.

Financial Aid

Grants, scholarships, loans and work/study programs are available for students. For most of this aid, prospective students must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, available from high school guidance offices and postsecondary financial aid offices. For more information on federal financial aid programs, visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov>.



For more information on federal financial aid programs, call (800) 4FEDAID

FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Average employment growth is projected for electrical and electronics installers and repairers of commercial and industrial equipment. This equipment will become more

sophisticated and will be used more frequently as businesses strive to lower costs by increasing and improving automation.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Electronic technicians work for many employers. Field technicians sometimes need to

carry or lift heavy equipment and parts.

RESOURCES - HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

ONLINE:

• www.ce.org
(Consumer Electronics Association)

• www.acesinternational.org
(Association of Communications and Electronics Schools)

GENERAL:

Society of Certified Electronics Technicians International
www.iscet.org

LOCAL:

Career Counselor, M. Teri Parrish
941-751-7900 ext. 2016
parrishm@manateeschools.net

Q&A

Q: What other areas of specialization are there for electronic technicians?

A: Many of our electrical systems rely on electronic parts to control how power is delivered to our home. Some electronic technicians work for electric utility companies to repair or maintain equipment at power plants or substations. Another area of specialization is working on transportation-related equipment, such as sonar or navigation equipment on boats or safety equipment on trains. Electronic technicians also work as installers for systems found in your automobile, such as sound systems, DVD players, navigation systems and security systems.

Q: Is working as an electronic technician dangerous?

A: The most serious hazard faced on the job is electric shock. Technicians are trained to follow safety steps to make sure no power or electricity is running to the machine while the technician is at risk for shock. While they also face the same day-to-day hazards as factory workers, electronic technicians are generally safe in their workplace.

JOBS IN THIS FIELD

Job titles	Place of work	Kind of work	Average salary*
Electronic technician	Manufacturer	Install, maintain, and repair the electronic components of machines and equipment.	\$15.13-\$24.03 (hourly median range)

*Salaries may vary depending on region and experience.
Sources: Chronicle Guidance Publications and Occupational Outlook Handbook.

YOU HAVE THE POWER

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