

TRANSPORTATION CAREER PATHWAYS IN VERMONT



Get Moving: Careers in Railway



TRC UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
TRANSPORTATION
RESEARCH CENTER

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1. Career Biography: Brion Muzzy
2. Educational and Career Resources

IS THIS CAREER RIGHT FOR YOU?

- Do you like trains?
- Is working outside important to you?
- Do you enjoy logistics and distribution?

WHAT IS RAIL TRANSPORTATION?

Rail transportation consists of transportation of passengers and goods in vehicles that run along rail tracks. It is one of the most historically significant modes of transportation in the northeast region of the United States.

RAIL IN VERMONT

The State of Vermont maintains approximately 450 miles of active rail lines in addition to inactive rail lines that are used for recreational purposes. There are also an additional 300 miles of privately held rail lines that are used for freight (materials) shipments. Every year, about \$8.6 billion in goods are shipped through Vermont via rail, which represents 17% of total goods moving into, out of, within, and through the State. Rail is the most energy-efficient mode of surface transportation and is also the best for the environment. Upgrades to Vermont's railroads are ongoing and are being emphasized by the Agency of Transportation as a way for the State's transportation infrastructure to accommodate ever-larger loads.



Career biography of Brion Muzzy

Brion is a lifelong resident of Chittenden County, having grown up in Shelburne and graduated from Rice high school, Burlington has been his stomping grounds for decades and over the years he has seen the rail industry in Burlington change over time. With a new emphasis on rail being made by the federal government, he is optimistic that the rail industry is going to see a revival in the coming decades that will return it to the robust transportation sector it once was in Vermont and the United States.

After high school and some time at college, Brion worked for IBM as a temporary worker and wanted to find full-time employment. His brother-in-law was working for Vermont Rail Systems at the time and helped him get an entry-level job as a track worker. His responsibilities as a track worker included installing ties, changing rails, general maintenance, replacing bolts, making sure the track profile was level and that there were no wash outs. He would also cut brush and put up fence and clear snow and ice from the tracks in winter. It was a lot of hard work, but “you can’t beat being outside,” he said about his time on the track. His progress into higher levels of at Vermont Rail Systems began on a day when the president of the company was reviewing the track crews and asked Brion what he wanted to do, to which Brion responded brashly “your job” to which the president said “prove it”. Brion set out to do just that.



After a few years on the track crew, Brion wanted to work more independently so he sought out a coworker who supervised the tracks and asked him about becoming a conductor/train engineer so that they could run work trains on their own without using a track crew. He got married and was looking to buy a house; knowing that he could not afford to put a down payment on one with the salary he was making, he moved out of maintenance altogether and into working on the trains. He ran the Burlington to Rutland line every night for around four years and had a ball doing it.



CAREER PATHWAYS IN RAIL: CAREER BIOGRAPHY BRION MUZZY

Another opportunity arose when the administrative offices needed a freight agent. Freight agents coordinate which trains will run on which lines and complete the necessary paperwork – it’s an office job and after spending years outdoors, Brion was ready to come inside. Through that job, he learned how radio dispatching, a skill that would help him advance in the future. The vice president of operations for all Vermont lines was retiring and the position was divided into three locations, one of which was Burlington. Brion applied and due to his years of experience on the track and dispatching trains, he was seen as an ideal candidate and was promoted.

Brion does not agree with the reputation that the rail industry has as being outdated or old-fashioned. It’s a thriving, modern industry where there are no boring days on the job. Even in the days where he routinely went back and forth between Burlington and Rutland, there was always something new and exciting that happened with every run. Rail is the backbone of the economy, everything we come into contact with has at some point been transported by rail. If you want exciting work that you can take all over the US and the world, then freight is the way to go.



Brion Muzzy's Career Pathway

IBM Temporary
Worker

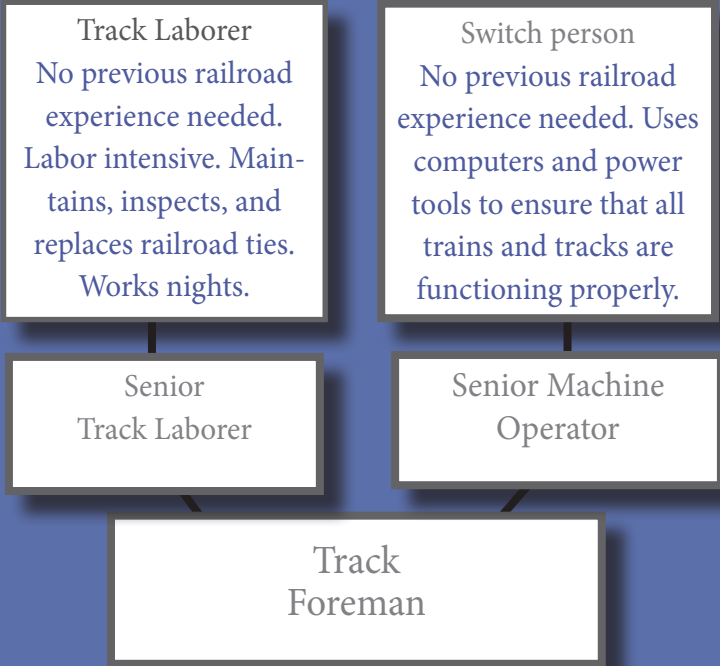
Vermont Rail Systems
Track Worker

Vermont Rail Systems
Train Conductor

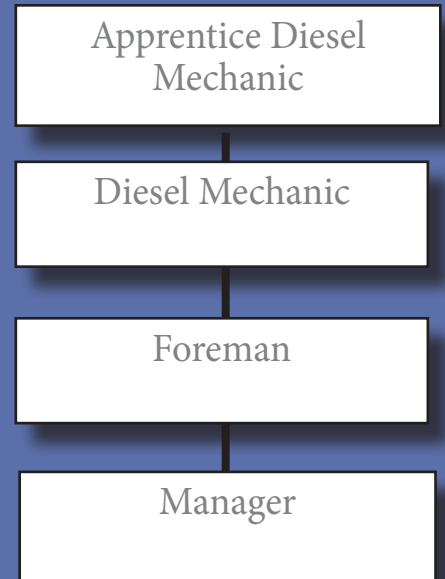
Vermont Rail Systems
Freight Agency
(Admin)

Vermont Rail Systems
Vice President of
Operations

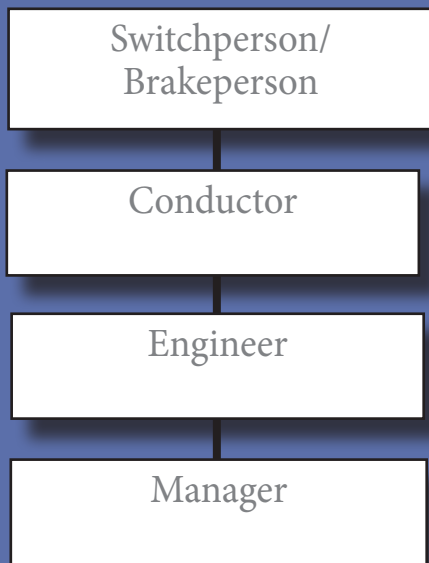
Track Mechanic Pathway (Dual track pathway)



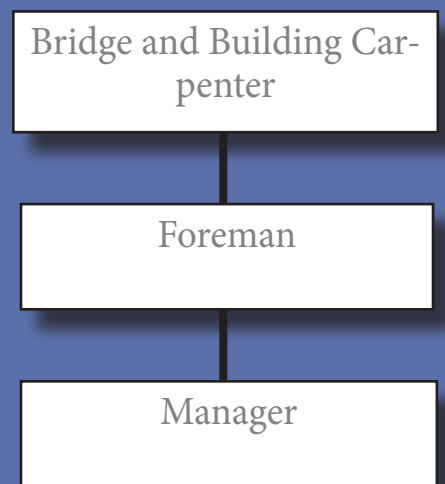
Diesel Mechanic



Train Crew/Service



Bridge and Building Carpenter



Getting a Start in a Transportation Career

The University of Vermont's Transportation Research Center (TRC) has worked with high schools, career centers and Adult Education programs to generate awareness about careers in the transportation industry and develop programs to provide the necessary skills to gain entry-level positions in all modes of transportation (aviation, transit, highway, maritime, pipeline and railway). Careers in transportation are not limited to any single mode; many of the skills in one area of transportation can be applied to many or all of the others. In many cases, getting your foot in the door in one mode of transportation gives you access to jobs in the other modes.

A Good Start in Transportation Work:

- Offers you lifelong job opportunities in an industry that is everywhere (you can work in the community you grew up in or find work anywhere in the country with the right skills).
- Provides essential services for our communities and business.
- Has great opportunities for advancement, as a high percentage of current workers will be retiring in the next decade.

Educational and Employment Resources in Rail

Educational Resources:

- Career and Technical Centers in Vermont- goo.gl/nwBVO
- Community College of Vermont Applied Business Practices (with a focus on transportation) - goo.gl/mHRWO
- Vermont Technical College - <http://www.vtc.edu>

For Educators

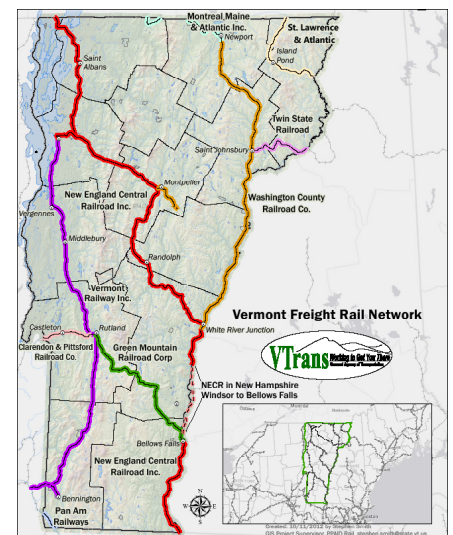
- Transportation Systems Academy - <http://www.uvm.edu/~transctr/>

Employment and Career Resources:

- Resume resource- <http://www.resumebuilder.com/>
- State rail resources - <http://rail.vermont.gov>
- Career skills resource - <http://humanresources.vermont.gov/>
- Occupational Information Network (O*NET) - <http://www.onetonline.org> (*Onet is a free online database of occupational information. Students, job seekers, businesses, and counselors should use Onet to explore careers in transportation.*)

For Veterans:

- US Department of Transportation Veterans Transportation Career Center - <http://www.dot.gov/veterantransportationcareers>
- My Next Move for Veterans - <http://www.mynextmove.org/vets/>
- Hero 2 Hire - <http://h2h.jobs>



Rail operators in Vermont