

A question for other members that have web press crews:

We run 3-person crews (for 3-shifts) on our full-size heatset webs (operator, roll tender and jogger). How do other web press operations, that run 3-shifts on a press, account for an absent employee on any given shift? In other words, how do you cover for that absent person?

Here are Adriane (Harrison, PIA VP for Human Relations)'s and my thoughts. I also spoke with a former heatset web manufacturing manager who now serves as one of our consultants. Obviously, there are no simple solutions for a thinly staffed pressroom.

Cross training is key. Roll tenders should be trained by lead press operators so they develop the competency and safety knowledge to run a press for a short time when needed. Roll tenders should also be cross trained on all web presses, so they can move between presses.

If there is a pressroom supervisor with press operation experience (as there often is), the supervisor should be able to fill in for a missing operator. That's the advantage of having a supervisor with hands-on press experience.

Press operators should be able to move between presses when needed. Occasionally rotating operators between presses can keep their knowledge of each press fresh. In a temporary absence of a roll tender, an operator can probably do both jobs, although productivity will certainly suffer.

In a three shift operation people could be moved from one shift to another, as needed.

There should be people in other areas of production that can temporarily fill in as joggers, or if not, the company should have an arrangement with a local temp agency to bring workers in. The amount of training required for a worker to be productive as a jogger is fairly small.

Another possibility is to bring recently retired pressroom individuals back in for a short time to fill a gap. This assumes of course that the company has recent retirees with necessary skills who might relish making money for a short-term assignment.

Finally, it sounds like the company would benefit from networking with high performing companies that have dealt with the same issue and have an ongoing continuous improvement program. The [CI Conference](#) is the place to do that.

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Yes cross training is a must but that's only if you have an extra body to put into that position. If it's a last minute call in then I'll have someone from the previous shift stay longer and the following shift start earlier.
