ZACH GIROD

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Process Engineer
Emerald Performance Materials

Starting a Career as a Process Engineer

ABSTRACT: Working in an industrial setting in 2018 emphasizes personnel and operational safety in addition to the typical role of process debottlenecking and optimization. Process Engineering today focuses on reducing staff personnel on safety concerns and process exposures. Plant maintenance and upgrades require many different disciplines, from welders, pipefitters, electricians, instrumentation technicians, operations staff and administration to safely and efficiently operate a plant, where each of those team members interacts with the site processes much differently. The role for the process engineer is to help identify, manage and then mitigate risks. Process engineers are expected to define the root causes and then implement projects to eliminate process hazards. In addition to safety projects, process engineering is the key shareholder for debottlenecking and improving plant operations. Much like safety projects, process engineers are expected to implement cost-effective projects for site improvement.

BIO: Biography: Zach Girod is currently a process engineer at Emerald Performance Materials in Kalama, WA. He started as a process engineer at the Phillips 66 Ferndale refinery in 2014 and then chose to move to a company closer to his home town of Vancouver, WA. Zach’s role within both of those companies was to identify, design and implement process changes or projects that helped mitigate or eliminate safety exposure concerns and/or debottleneck the site operations for better throughput. In his current role of process engineering for toluene oxidation, he also manages and directs operations for the wastewater treatment plants and utilities.