Opportunities and Challenges for Employment in the Construction Industry
Opportunities

Jobs in the Construction Industry are attractive to individuals and entities looking to find employment opportunities for several reasons:

- Projections show need for workers
- Jobs can’t be moved off shore
- Construction careers provide high paying employment with good health care and retirement benefits
- Training is provided through Apprenticeships and On The Job Training, allowing new entrants to earn while they learn
- Work environment offers more freedom than a typical office worker
Unique Environment

- Work environment can change daily both in application and location
- Workers get to go places and see things that most people don’t have the opportunity
- From underground tunnels to CEO offices at the top of skyscrapers
- Successful construction workers enjoy a challenge and variety of work
## Variety

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Boilermakers</th>
<th>Bricklayers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters</td>
<td>Flooring Installers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tile Setters</td>
<td>Cement Finishers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrazzo Workers</td>
<td>Laborers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heavy Equipment Operators</td>
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<td>Ceiling Tile Installers</td>
<td>Tapers</td>
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<td>Electricians</td>
<td>Glaziers</td>
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<td>Insulators</td>
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<td>Pipelayers</td>
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<td>Pipefitters</td>
<td>Plasterers</td>
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<td>Ironworkers</td>
<td>Roofers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspectors</td>
<td>Elevator Constructors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asbestos Abators</td>
<td>Rail Track Layers</td>
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Challenges

Seasonal variations
- For example - MN lost 900 construction jobs January to February

Boom and Bust economy can present challenges to workers

Little research has been done on what the right size of the industry: How much capacity is needed? How many workers can make a career?

Other Economic events
- 911 Attacks, Tech boom, Recession all took their toll
Metro Area Monthly Employment
Role of Politics

- Employment opportunities subject to political will
- Size and scope of Bonding Bill
  - Bonding bill provides steady amount of work
  - 2004 legislative stalemate produced no bonding bill
- Large Projects
  - Midtown Global Market
  - Mall of America
  - Stadia
  - Mayo – DMC
  - SW LRT
Practical Challenges

- Reliable transportation
- Unscrupulous competition
- Dangerous work environment
- Reduced employment means many are struggling to get enough hours to progress in their apprenticeship or to earn enough pension credits to retire
- Physically demanding work can limit longevity
- Increased emphasis on Background Checks
Personal Challenges

- Ability to budget for downtimes
- Childcare
- Candidate ability to not only complete training, but on the job-site to show up on time consistently, to behave appropriately, to have and wear appropriate attire
- During downturns members who can travel for work have access to more opportunities
Early Exposure
Missing components

- Early Exposure
- Lack of role-models in underrepresented communities
- Vocational education in K-12
- Too much focus on college readiness
- Solutions to transportation challenges
- Support for families
Opportunities and Challenges abound in the construction industry

Successful entrants need to have skills, desire, and support in order to make it a rewarding career.
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