

I ndustry Snapshots

- Total employment in the construction industry is projected to rise from approximately 6.9 million jobs in 2004 to 7.7 million jobs in 2014, an increase of nearly 800,000 new jobs.
- Projected employment growth between 2004 and 2014 is substantial for a wide range of construction-related occupations, including:
 - Electricians: 77,000 new jobs
 - Carpenters: 186,000 new jobs
 - Construction managers: 45,000 new jobs
- Earnings in construction are higher than the average for all industries. In 2004, production or nonsupervisory workers in construction averaged \$19.23 an hour, or about \$736 a week.
- Construction offers more opportunities than most other industries for individuals who want to own and run their own business.

High Growth INDUSTRY PROFILE

W orkforce Issues

Image and outreach to the public

The image of the industry could be improved in a variety of areas and especially among key audiences including youth, parents, educators and guidance counselors. For example, youth are not familiar with the various job choices and career ladders the industry offers and guidance counselors are not aware of the skills required for many of the occupations in the construction trades.

Recruitment

Lack of awareness of job opportunities and a poor industry image have contributed to the decline in the number of people from traditional labor pools willing to enter and remain in the construction industry. The industry has difficulty recruiting youth and individuals from non-traditional labor pools. Though the industry has made extensive efforts to target youth, it remains a challenge recruiting them. At the same time, women and other representatives of non-traditional labor pools are not as prevalent in the industry as they could be.

Construction offers a variety of career opportunities. People with many different talents and educational backgrounds – managers, clerical workers, engineers, truck drivers, trades workers and construction helpers – find job opportunities in the construction industry. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Skill development and education and training capacity: youth

Some youth lack math and language academic skills needed for work in the construction industry. Also, the capacity and capability of some education and training providers that serve youth could be improved. For example, some vocational-technical high schools lack key resources, such as books and curriculum and secondary school teachers could benefit from spending time in apprenticeship programs. In addition, partnerships and information sharing among key stakeholders are vital for success.

Skill development and education and training capacity: entry-level workers and incumbent workers

Developing the skills of entry-level and incumbent workers is another challenge facing the construction industry. For example, some entry-level workers lack the skills to effectively use the increasingly complex technology being utilized in the construction industry, and many incumbent workers need to improve their leadership and management skills. Further, the capacity of some education and training providers that serve entry-level and incumbent workers could also be improved. For example, some community colleges lack the capacity to accommodate additional students.

Skill Sets

(Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006-07 Career Guide to Industries)

- People can enter the construction industry with a variety of educational backgrounds. Those entering the industry right out of high school often start as laborers, helpers, or apprentices. Technical or vocational school graduates entering the industry may also go through apprenticeship training and, therefore, may progress at a somewhat faster pace because they already have had courses such as mathematics, mechanical drawing and woodworking.
- Many people enter the construction trades through apprenticeship programs. These programs offer on-the-job training under the close supervision of an experienced craftworker and formal classroom instruction. Apprenticeships are administered by local employers, trade associations and trade unions.
- Most skilled craft jobs require proficiency in reading and mathematics, while safety training is required for most jobs.
- Skilled workers such as carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers and other construction trade specialists need either several years of informal on-the-job experience or apprenticeship training.

ETA in Action

In June 2003, ETA announced the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative to engage businesses with local education providers and the local/regional workforce investment system to find solutions that address changing talent development needs in various industries.

In October 2005, the Community-Based Job Training Grants were announced to improve the role of community colleges in providing affordable, flexible and accessible education for the nation's workforce.

ETA is investing more than \$260 million in 26 different regions across the United States in support of the WIRED (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development) Initiative. Through WIRED, local leaders design and implement strategic approaches to regional economic

development and job growth. WIRED focuses on catalyzing the creation of high skill, high wage opportunities for American workers through an integrated approach to economic and talent development.

These initiatives reinforce ETA's commitment to transform the workforce system through engaging business, education, state and local governments and other federal agencies with the goal of creating a skilled workforce to meet the dynamic needs of today's economy.

Investments

ETA has invested \$51,779,207 in the construction industry. This includes nine High Growth Job Training Initiative grants totaling \$35,134,804 and 10 Community-Based Job Training grants totaling \$16,644,403. Leveraged resources from all of the grantees total \$19,280,811.

Resources

For additional background information about the industry and details on the grants, information about employment and training opportunities and workforce development tools for employers, educators and workforce professionals, please visit: www.doleta.gov/BRG, www.careervoyages.gov, www.careeronestop.org, and www.workforce3one.org.