



**Construction Trade
Awareness**



**Unions: What They Do and
How They Operate**

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 *Value on Display.
EVERY DAY.*

What is a union?

- Organization recognized as the official representative of a specific group of workers with respect to their Wages, Hours and Conditions of Work.
- Official recognition:
 - Election of workers, majority vote for the union
 - Construction employers can *choose* to be signatory to an existing union contract.



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 *Value on Display.
EVERY DAY.*

What do construction unions do?


- Negotiate wages, hours and conditions of work
 - Collective bargaining agreement/contract
- Help members find work
 - Hiring halls
- Skills training programs
 - Training centers
- Resolve workplace problems
 - Contract administration
- Political action
- Trustees on benefit funds
- And more...

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Negotiated Economic Package

- Hourly pay: Wage
 - Set based on job
- Health insurance Contribution
 - Pooled contributions from employers
 - Eligibility based on hours worked
- Pension Contribution
 - Pooled contributions from employers
 - Eligibility based on service credits (
- Training Fund Contribution
- Other:
 - Vacation fund
 - Marketing fund
 - 401 K



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How Hiring Halls Work


- The General Premise
 - Construction work is intermittent
 - Signatory contractors share pool of workers (union members)
 - Contractors get workers when they need them, send back who they don't need.
- The Process
 - Contractors call union for xx workers for their projects
 - Union maintains a list of available members
 - Includes member qualifications
 - Union offers the work to the members at the top of the list
 - Member can turn down xx number of jobs before going to bottom of the list.
 - Members go back to the hall when no longer needed

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Your Union "Card"

- Confirms your status as a journeyman in that trade
- Sometimes includes listing of training certifications
- Verifies your legitimacy on certain jobs/projects
- Transferable within that trade throughout North America**



- 9-11 and WTC

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How do unions work?

National
Council
Local

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What about dues?

- Monthly dues
- Working dues
- Check off
- Consequences of not paying
- ***The best things in life AREN'T free!***

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Labor-Management Cooperation

- Unions try to keep their employers in business to keep their members working
- Employers need access to skilled labor to stay in business

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Scenario

- You are a small specialty contractor. You have been in business for 10 years. You barely survived the 2008 Recession. Every job is competitive with a razor thin profit margin. You have a job underway. You call the union for 5 qualified tradespeople (meaning they have the skills certification necessary for this work.) After three days on the job enough time has gone by for you to assess which, if any, of these workers you want to hold on to as long as you can and which, if any, you will send back not wanting to see on any of your jobs again.*
- Three keeper qualities *and why*
- Three deal breaker qualities *and why*

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Union Codes of Conduct

- Intended to hold all parties accountable
- Particular emphasis on member conduct to add value
- Consequences for violations

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Union Codes of Conduct

- Common elements
- "8 for 8"
- Ethics
- Honesty
- Respect for others and Property

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Other points in construction work

- Take the good jobs with the bad jobs
- Can be noisy and dirty
- Drug and alcohol policies
- Pranks/bullying/yelling
- Security clearance
- Reliable transportation
- Cell phones
- Smoking

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