

## Construction and Extraction

### First-line Supervisors/ Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers

***First-Line Supervisors/ Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers*** supervise and coordinate the activities of construction trades or extraction workers. They sometimes go by the title of foreman or forewoman. Their job involves the supervision of the crew of a construction site and the coordination of all on-site activities. They examine and inspect work, equipment and construction sites to verify safety and ensure that specifications are met as well as read blueprints and data to determine the requirements and plan procedures.

They are often responsible for estimating the cost of material and make decisions regarding the number of workers needed to complete the job. First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers schedule the activities of construction or extractive workers and confer with other managers and personnel to solve problems. They make decisions about the ordering of materials and supplies and will often locate, measure, and mark the areas for placement of equipment and structures, and assign employees to specific jobs. They will often analyze and plan installation and construction of equipment and structures.

An ability to lead and good communications skills are needed as supervisors discuss prices and details of the work with customers and must explain job details with the people they supervise. A major part of the job involves interpreting design plans or work requirements for other workers and inspecting their work. They confer with staff and workers to ensure production and personnel problems are resolved and will suggest and initiate personnel actions, such as promotions, transfers, and hires.

Construction Supervisors sometimes work outdoors in severe weather conditions. At construction sites they may be exposed to potentially dangerous equipment, hazardous debris, and heavy falling objects, and are required to wear safety gear such as hardhats and safety glasses. Construction Supervisors may be exposed to uncomfortably high noise levels.

Most Construction Supervisors work a 40-hour week, but in some cases may work overtime, as well as weekends and holidays. Usually construction supervisors work at one site at a time, but some may have responsibilities at multiple-sites. They are often at work before other workers arrive and after they leave. Construction supervisors may be on-call in case of emergencies.

## Education/Training

### *How to Obtain:*

These positions are generally held by professionals after many years of experience as trained practitioners in some specific trade or area of construction. They are often achieved through a series of promotions or through starting one's own small business. These managers must have a comprehensive knowledge of the many different fields of work that occur on a construction site. Workers in these positions are often drawn from the ranks of the trades' workers and include workers who have been in the industry for a long time, have worked their way up to manager or supervisor, and have extensive experience in the industry. For these jobs, work experience is currently more important to employers than formal education such as a bachelor's degree.

Generally a High School Diploma or equivalent is needed, and many workers also have a technical certificate from a vocational school, or through an associate degree program. First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers must complete an apprenticeship program in a construction trade. An apprenticeship program typically lasts between 3 and 4 years. Apprenticeships can usually be located through local unions, contactors, or professional associations. In addition to on-the-job training, apprenticeships will often require a minimum of 144 hours of classroom instruction per year.

Some First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers are required to have a professional license. For example, Construction Supervisors who supervise plumbers often need a plumbing license from the State Contractors Licensing Board. See individual career field information page (i.e. carpenters, plumbers, roofers or construction workers) for licensing requirements by trade.

### *More Information on Certification:*

- American Institute of Constructors, Constructors Certification Commission:  
[www.constructorcertification.org](http://www.constructorcertification.org)
- Construction Management Association of America:  
[www.cmaanet.org](http://www.cmaanet.org)
- American Council for Construction Education:  
[www.acce-hq.org](http://www.acce-hq.org)

### *Average Costs:*

Apprenticeship programs generally do not charge the apprentice for classroom instruction, provided the apprentice maintains employment with a contractor affiliated with the apprenticeship program, throughout the apprenticeship period of generally 3 to 4 years.

Note: Costs of continuing education and licenses, where necessary, vary by trade.