

SPARKING INTEREST IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



**Construction
Inclusion Week**

TOOLBOX TALKS

02



Estimated Time:

15 minutes max



Audience:

**All employees: Field, Office,
Leadership, Educators.**

CIW PILLARS:

*Community Engagement,
Attract & Retain*

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE:

This Toolbox Talk is provided as a voluntary workforce development resource in support of Construction Inclusion Week. It does not impose or endorse any directives, quotas, or identity-based exclusions or preferences.

The content reflects voluntary best practices and is designed to promote safety, opportunity, and inclusive team culture benefiting everyone across the construction industry, to help support, attract, and retain top talent.

Construction Inclusion Week does not control or endorse the content of third-party links. Activities should be adapted to align with your company's legal policies and job-related criteria.



SPARKING INTEREST IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This conversation encourages teams to actively promote construction careers to students and build long-term pipelines of talent.

- Understand why engaging students early builds the future workforce.
- Learn how to share your story to make the trades feel relatable
- Know how to connect with students, educators and families.
- Spot myths about construction and know how to correct them.
- Inspire students to see construction as one of many strong career paths that offer growth and opportunity.

DEFINITIONS

Trade Careers:

Skilled roles such as electrical, carpentry, HVAC, plumbing, and welding, often gained through hands-on training or apprenticeships.

Workforce Pipeline: The systems and pathways that introduce, prepare, and connect individuals, especially students for careers in construction.

Micro-Mentorship: Small acts, like offering advice or listening, build trust, confidence, and culture voluntarily without being tied to employment decisions. For example, taking 2 minutes to explain a task or checking in with a new team member.

Psychological Safety: The ability to speak up, ask questions, ask for help or admit mistakes without fear.

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Some families and students may not be aware of the full range of skills, pay levels, and career paths construction offers.
- Visibility matters, when students see relatable role models thriving in this field, it shifts their mindsets.
- Trades careers offer purpose, income and mobility, and purpose, but students need to see it to believe it.



KEY CONCEPTS:

- Trades careers offer purpose, income and mobility, and purpose, **but students need to see it to believe it.**
- A site tour, classroom visit, or casual conversation can be the spark that changes a student's future or inspire a career.
- Every team member, field or office, has the power to inspire by sharing their pride and story.

Many young people still don't know what a career in construction can look like. They might think it's only about hard labor or that it doesn't offer long-term opportunities. But we know that construction offers strong careers, meaningful work, and a clear path to grow.

This talk is about how we can help students, parents, and educators see the value of trades and how to get involved. Every team member has a story to share, about how they got into construction, what they've learned, and why they've stayed. Sharing your story could inspire someone to take the first step.





Getting involved with schools, community programs, or youth organizations is a great way to show the next generation what construction is really about. It doesn't have to be complicated. A jobsite tour, a classroom visit, or a quick video about "Why I Build" can leave a lasting impact.

By showing up, speaking honestly, and being visible, we break stereotypes and create new possibilities. When students see role models with relatable career paths and experiences, as well as clear pathways to the trades, it helps them picture themselves here too.

Opening doors means creating a path forward for others. When we connect with the next generation, we help build the future of construction.



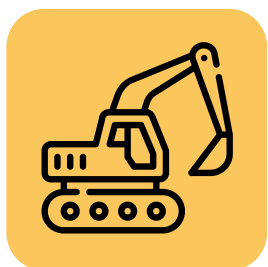


ACTIVITY OPTIONS:

General Ask:

Think about when and how you first heard about construction as a career. What do you wish someone had shown or told you earlier. Now consider how you could help students see the trades differently, today or this year.

The following page includes ways to practice mentorship, on site, in the office, or with community partners:



JOBSITE



OFFICE



**SCHOOL/
COMMUNITY**



GROUP



JOBSITE ACTIVITIES

- Practice 60-second “Trade Pitches” to describe your work in simple exciting ways and why it matters.
- Invite a student program or school to tour the site safely.
- Create a “This is What We Build” photo wall or banner.
- Host an “Ask a Trade partner” Q&A during lunch.
- Feature a student story board: “Why I’d Join Construction” (w/ Students quotes or drawings)
- Display stats about careers and job growth in visible areas.
- Add a team log: “3 Student Outreach Ideas for Our Site”



OFFICE ACTIVITIES

- Build a “Career Day Kit” with key talking points, visuals, and personal stories.
- Host a digital photo wall or social media campaign; **“Why I Build”** across departments.
- Record 1-minute employee intro videos to share with local schools.
- Invite student participants to an office walkthrough or project planning session.



SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Sponsor a “Tool Demo Day” with trade professionals and hands-on activities.
- Invite trade professionals to speak about their path to the industry.
- Partner with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Career and Technical Education (CTE) and shop teachers to co-host skill building sessions.
- Create take-home handouts for families explaining modern construction careers.



GROUP ACTIVITIES

- Break into small groups and brainstorm 3 ways your company could engage students of all ages this year.
- Build a “Trades MythBusters” list as a team, ask, what do students get wrong about the industry?
- Each person shares one reason they love what they do, and who they wish they could tell.
- Watch a short video of a student trades spotlight (e.g., SkillsUSA) and discuss. Draft a classroom activity idea your team could bring to a school visit. Role-play a conversation with a student who says, “Construction isn’t for me.”



*Let's show
students why
construction **is a
future worth
building.***



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stereotypes do students and parents/families have about construction careers?
2. How can we make construction more visible and more relatable?
3. What stories or actions can you share to make construction, and the trades feel exciting?
4. How can we better partner with local schools or training programs?
5. Who's someone that inspired you to pursue this path?

Let's show students and new workers that **construction is not just a job, it's a future.**



THIS MONTH:

- Speak at a local school classroom or on a career day.
- Share a video or post about what you do and what it means to you.
- Host or volunteer for a jobsite visit for students or interns or career day.
- Mentor a student who is thinking about careers.
- Connect with a local community-based organization that focuses on trades or construction careers.



POST YOUR IMPACT:

#ConstructionInclusionWeek
#CIWOpeningDoors
#FutureofTrades

Resources:

- SkillsUSA
- YouthBuild
- NAWIC Education Foundation
- Build Your Future" (by NCCER)