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THE WHOLE-OF-FIRM APPROACH

A NEW PARADIGM FOR
CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

ARCORO

Based on Insights from the
*2023 AGC of America National Construction Industry HR
& Workforce Conference*



Addressing Construction's Workforce Challenges: Bringing the Industry Together

The construction industry continues to face significant headwinds when it comes to employees. There isn't a large pool of talent to recruit from, experienced workers are retiring and those entering the field don't have a high degree of skill, turnover is high, and wages are rising. Year after year, AGC members report they can't find help and in some cases are turning down projects.

Add to this the additional work that's coming online because of infrastructure and other government spending and the workforce pressure continues to mount.

To help address these challenges, AGC of America held its first-ever National Construction Industry HR & Workforce Conference in November 2023.

The meeting featured a host of keynote speakers, breakout sessions and facilitated conversations that focused on some of the biggest HR and workforce challenges facing the construction industry. While the sessions varied by topic, there were several main themes that emerged from the conference. **In each session, participants stressed that the only way to successfully address workforce shortages is through a whole-of-firm approach where key stakeholders from across the organization participate in techniques and tactics to address workforce issues.**

The reality is that this is an all-hands-on-deck proposition; no single operation within any firm – be it a firm's leadership, HR team, front line staff or others – can tackle the recruiting and retention challenges needed to overcome labor shortages. It's the firms that are tackling these issues at all levels – with the support of construction educators, AGC chapters and other key stakeholders – that are making a difference and gaining headway.

A vital concern: Finding employees...then keeping them on board

Another key theme that emerged from the late-2023 conference is that workforce development is not just about recruiting new workers into the industry. It is also about finding more effective ways to retain those new workers, as well as the ones already involved in the industry.

Conference participants spent a lot of time talking through the challenge of worker retention. During the discussion it became clear that there are three big factors that contribute to effective retention strategies within the industry:

- Culture and vision
- Training and development
- Creating clear opportunities for advancement

The whole-of-firm approach requires key stakeholder input and action

How these key factors are operationalized and addressed within individual firms is different based on a person's organizational role. It's not just HR's responsibility to manage workforce challenges, the C-suite and front-line employees each have a role in a whole-of-firm approach.

And, although there are overlaps, these roles each have a different focus. In recognition of these nuances, this report is divided into sections outlining tactics various stakeholders can leverage to address workforce shortages. This includes steps company leaders should consider taking, measures for HR professionals, and ways front line personnel—including supervisors and project managers—can take to deal with workforce shortages.

Within each section, the report highlights measures that are more specific to the challenge of workforce recruitment and those that are more related to workforce retention. However, some of the steps outlined apply to both areas, and the report notes how they relate to both sides of the workforce challenge.

The two-fold purpose of this report

First, this report is designed to catalogue tactics that firms are successfully using to address construction workforce shortages. Where possible, links are included to give users the opportunity to learn more about the various tactics and also contact the people using them.

Review the tactics listed and consider implementing any and all that might be applicable to your firm. And appreciate that workforce development is as much about retention as it is about recruiting. Filling the bucket is one thing, making sure your bucket isn't full of holes is another.

More broadly, this report is designed to make the case, particularly to construction industry leaders, that it's important to empower everyone at their firm to get involved in workforce development. The HR and marketing teams also need to be involved, as do the training operation and the front-line project leaders.

But ultimately, workforce development begins at the top. Empowering your entire team and leading by example are crucial first and ongoing steps.

This report is designed to offer the information and insights to do just that—for leaders, and for other stakeholders across the industry.

Arcoro was a sponsor of the *2023 AGC of America National Construction Industry HR & Workforce Conference* and supported AGC in the production of this report and associated content.



Section I

Workforce Development Measures for the C-Suite

While it involves other stakeholders, successful workforce development requires a top-down approach. Without buy-in and support from company leaders, the tactics required to recruit and retain the workforce for the near and longer term won't be successful. The C-suite needs to understand the significance of workforce development as a tool for business success.

Five specific suggestions for company leaders emerged from the *National Construction Industry HR & Workforce Conference*:

1. Partner to recruit from non-traditional pools of possible workers.
2. Build stronger relationships with construction education institutions to improve the quality of candidates and support recruitment efforts.
3. Make career trajectories at your firm clear, flexible and transparent to better retain current and future workers.
4. Defining, sharing and living the core values of your firms is key to retaining workers.
5. Align with Human Resources to implement an integrated, enterprise-wide approach to reach workforce goals.

Within each of these focus areas, participants shared suggestions and examples of success.

Partner to recruit from non-traditional pools of possible workers

- ❖ **Consider potential candidates from criminal justice-involved populations.** This includes getting involved in programs like the Texas Department of Transportation's [Connect U 2 Jobs](#). It is a 9- to 12-week program designed to get 18 to 22-year-olds who are criminal justice-involved into the horizontal construction industry. Programs like this offer firms an opportunity to tap into new pools of workers. But they also come with challenges, including the need to pay wages for future workers involved in this program and the willingness to support people with a troubled background. Dallas-area construction firm [Webber](#) has used this program successfully and convinced other firms to support it as well.

- ❖ **Be willing to invest the time, energy and resources in working with groups that support people from less privileged backgrounds.** This includes organizations like [unCommon Construction](#). These groups work with youth from less privileged areas to expose them to apprentice-style construction positions. The benefit of these programs is they expand the pool of workers who are qualified and interested in pursuing construction careers. The challenge is these programs need support in terms of contributions and firms willing to work with their participants. Construction industry leaders also need to appreciate that programs like unCommon Construction do not guarantee job placements to their partner organizations. The point is to expose these youth to construction careers. Some will go to work right away, others may enroll in college and then come into the industry later.
- ❖ **Encourage and support your HR team to explore ways to bring high-school aged youth to the job site in some form of paid positions.** While child labor laws offer a range of protections for the types of roles under-aged workers can perform, most states allow younger workers to be present on job sites, particularly if they are engaged in activities designed to help them learn new skills. Ensuring your firm is complying with all applicable laws and safety codes is challenging, so make sure your HR team knows you are backing their efforts to expose younger people to the career opportunities that exist on your jobsites. The potential payoff should outweigh the extra work involved.

Build stronger relationships with construction education institutions to improve the quality of candidates and support recruitment efforts

- ❖ **Get involved with your local school Career and Technical Education program's advisory board.** Every school district is required by law to have an industry advisory board to support its career and technical education (CTE) program, what used to be known as vocational education. Construction leaders should identify their local advisory boards – in consultation with their local AGC chapter when available – and volunteer to serve on it. Having construction industry leaders on these boards will help strengthen the connection between the industry and educators and give those industry leaders an opportunity to learn about – and provide – the kind of support those school programs need to be successful.
- ❖ **Encourage, and provide the time needed, for your younger professionals to return to the schools they attended, get involved with supporting their programs and potentially recruit new workers.** Students are more likely to be influenced by people from their community with whom they have shared experiences. Letting that new project manager spend some time at their old high school to help with the CTE program and talk to students about the benefits of working in construction can be worth the investment in their time away from a project.
- ❖ **Support dedicated public school construction programs.** One example is Hoover, Alabama's [Riverchase Career Connections Center](#). Programs like this work hard to expose students to a learning environment that is as close to a real-world job site as possible. They serve as an invaluable resource for preparing future workers and showing students the career opportunities available to them in construction. They also provide an alternate path to success for students who are less likely to flourish in a traditional classroom setting. But they need support from construction firms, including materials, money and volunteer staff to help.
- ❖ **Push your school district to establish dedicated construction programs if they don't already have one.** Many school districts, particularly urban ones, own empty, unused school buildings. Get involved with your school district and urge them to convert that space into a construction-specific program. Be willing to help support fundraising, lobby for state and county funding and provide equipment and materials such a program would need. Your local AGC chapter can also serve as an invaluable ally in these efforts. A great example is the work the East Tennessee AGC did, in coordination with many local firms, to establish Chattanooga's [Construction Career Center](#).

- ❖ **Encourage your older workers to extend their careers by serving as construction CTE teachers.** Most school districts have a hard time finding qualified teachers to work in construction-focused programs. Kansas, for example, currently has 60 vacant construction CTE teaching positions. Be willing to help your seasoned workers get certified to teach and get placed in local construction education programs. This will help ensure the quality of candidates coming out of your local school districts and potentially expose future workers to the benefits of your firm.
- ❖ **Be willing to partner with local community colleges and other groups to create construction training and education programs to help prepare new workers.** Omaha, Nebraska's [Metropolitan Community College](#) partnered with [Turner Construction](#) to create a training program called [Hardhat in Hand](#) to help prepare newly hired workers for data center projects the construction firm was building. Many community colleges have the flexibility, and capacity, to create tailored programs. Meanwhile, [NCCER](#) can help provide the curriculum content for those tailored training and education programs.

Make career trajectories at your firm clear, flexible and transparent to better retain current and future workers

- ❖ **Encourage your field and front office teams to mix “boots and suits” more often.** People in the field may have little idea about the roles of the various front-office teams. They may also feel disconnected from and unheard by the broader company. Likewise, the front office teams may not fully understand and appreciate the challenges field teams face. Many firms participating at the conference reported success with inviting field staff to front-office meetings and getting front-office staff of all types out to the field more often. This helps members of both sides of a firm better understand each other and it supports retention by giving all personnel a better connection to the work of the firm and more opportunities to be heard.
- ❖ **Embrace flexibility at your firm to make construction careers more attractive to workers with young families or other non-work obligations.** One firm, [Strack Inc.](#), reports that it checks employee zip codes when building project teams to minimize the distance an employee drives to a project. Other firms, including [Webber](#), allow employees with a criminal justice-involved background to meet with their parole officers at project sites to make it easier for them to comply with their release conditions.
- ❖ **Consider providing more flexible work schedules for employees to help with retention.** Some participants reported their firms have had success implementing 4-10 work schedules, where employees work 10 hours a day, four days a week. This gives employees an opportunity to have one weekday set aside for things like doctor's appointments, school meetings, etc. As a result, it becomes easier for employees to continue working while meeting their personal obligations.
- ❖ **AGC EDGE** **Invest in programs that offer a range of training and education content designed to help construction professionals develop the skills they need to advance their career.** This includes [AGC Edge](#) that offers courses including supervision fundamentals, project management, and safety as well as specialized topics such as lean and building information modeling. Investing in training signals to workers that they are valued and helps support retention. If you offer your own training program, make it accessible with an online learning management system that allows for individualized training tracks.

“You have to fix your people problem to address your work problems.”

- 2023 conference participant

Defining, sharing and living the core values of your firms is key to retaining workers

- ❖ **Culture is a business necessity.** Many firms participating in the conference stressed the importance of establishing a common company culture and values and then making sure that the culture is taught, modeled, and lived every day. Employees ultimately feel more connected to a firm when they understand and feel involved in its culture. They added that firms should also embrace charitable activities that are consistent with their values. Engaging workers in efforts to better their communities will help them feel more connected to the firm. And they stressed the importance of taking time out of the year to bring the entire staff together to share how the firm is doing and reinforce those values. One example of this includes the [Building Forward](#) culture created by Robins & Morton.
- ❖ **Consider investing in a formal onboarding program.** Onboarding is more than filling out paperwork, and good onboarding requires all new employees to spend a week or more learning about the company's values, and spending time getting a better understand of the firm's values and operations. The idea is to give new employees a much better understanding of how their work fits into the bigger picture, to appreciate the firm's values and to better appreciate the ways they might be able to advance their careers at the firm. [Strack Inc.](#), for example, shared details on their formal onboarding program during the conference.
- ❖ **Celebrate your team at all levels.** The [AGC of Michigan](#) and [Robins & Morton](#) shared information about how members accomplish this including creating and sharing internally produced video spotlights on different workers, spotlighting them in their social media posts and getting high-performing field workers involved in front-office projects. These efforts help to better connect workers to their firms and demonstrate how firms value and celebrate their workers. Construction leaders should encourage their teams, particularly their HR and marketing teams, to invest time in celebrating their workforce.
- ❖ **Embrace programs to support worker mental health.** The construction industry is dealing with a mental health crisis that is leading construction workers to take their own lives at a rate four times higher than the national average. Firms can build support and improve retention rates – and potentially save lives – by embracing programs to identify and address mental health challenges. [Youturn Health](#), for example, provides mental health counseling and support by trained professionals from the same background as your workers. So, if an equipment operator is struggling, they will identify a former equipment operator to work with them.

Align with Human Resources to implement an integrated, enterprise-wide approach to reach workforce goals

- ❖ **HR and Operations can successfully partner for the greater good of growing the business.** Several successful firms reported how they have put aside the sometimes-competing priorities between HR and operations to come together to co-create solutions that help build a strong organization while fighting the war on talent and a tumultuous and competitive economy.
- ❖ **Consider elevating the HR role away from finance.** Historically HR in construction has been limited and relegated to a siloed role, responding to simple employment and compliance issues. Many firms continue this practice without a role for HR in their workforce development efforts. However, some successful firms have elevated HR to the C-suite, taking a holistic approach to their specific business plan, culture aspirations and workforce needs.



Section II

Workforce Development Measures for the HR Team

Traditionally, workforce development has been the domain of HR, and these are the people with the most experience and expertise. However, as the industry continues to struggle with recruiting and retention, finding new ways to approach these challenges makes sense.

These areas were identified by conference participants as vital.

- Build new recruiting partnerships.
- Embrace new ways of supporting your current workforce.

Build new recruiting partnerships

- ❖ **Find and partner with public sector workforce development programs.** This includes programs like the Federal Highway Administration's [Highway Construction Workforce Partnership](#) that provides state departments of transportation and highway construction firms and AGC chapters with resources, support, and connections to help enhance their recruiting efforts. The agency has even released a [playbook](#) offering examples from some of the many workforce development partnerships they have created.
- ❖ **Explore partnering with outside groups to help reach non-traditional pools of labor.** Organizations like [Connect U2 Jobs](#) (covered above) work with people who were previously involved with the criminal justice system. Another example is [unCommon Construction](#) (covered above) that works with youth from under-served communities. Embracing programs like this require different HR practices, including taking steps like allowing employees to meet with their parole officers on job sites.
- ❖ **Participate in or organize your own construction career day events with local schools.** These events offer school students one of the relatively few opportunities they will have to learn about a career in construction. Some communities already have established construction career days, like the [Arizona Construction Career Days](#) in Phoenix and Tucson. But if not, then your firm should explore establishing a local event either in coordination with your AGC chapter or with other construction firms in your area.

- ❖ **Offer to hold information sessions with local teachers and counselors about construction and the career opportunities available to their students.** Do not underestimate the value of educators understanding what kind of careers are available within the industry. Asking if you can come and brief them before or after school on what is available is a good way to begin building a strong relationship with local educators. In addition to covering the career opportunities available, also consider briefing those educators on what kind of skills (soft and hard) candidates need to have to be employable at your firm.
- ❖ **Find ways to support local construction competitions for students.** One example is [Skills USA](#). As one Texas educator at the conference said, “kids love to get out of their classrooms, so the more competitions you help support, the merrier.” These programs need everything from judges to volunteers, money, and resources. Supporting them, or helping set them up in your local area, is a great way to get more students exposed to construction as a possible career.
- ❖ **Embrace the challenge of bringing younger workers onto the jobsite.** As discussed above, most states allow firms to employ younger workers, with restrictions on the type of work they can perform. But creating youth employment opportunities can be worth the effort in exchange for the opportunity to expose future workers to construction careers and your firm.
- ❖ **Understand that your company isn’t just marketing to prospective clients, it is also marketing to future workers.** HR should coordinate closely with the marketing team to promote the firm’s brand in a way that will make it appealing to potential applicants. This could include creating marketing materials that highlight the amazing projects the firm builds, its commitment to the community and/or how its employees have become successful.
- ❖ **Explore opportunities to partner with local community colleges to create tailored training and education programs for new and existing workers.** As mentioned above in Section I, the partnership between [Metropolitan Community College](#) and [Turner Construction](#) to create an on-site training program called [Hardhat in Hand](#) for new hires working on data center projects is an example.
- ❖ **Take advantage of other workforce development resources, including the after-action reports from prior AGC of America workforce development meetings.** The reports from [2021](#) and [2022](#) offer a catalogue of workforce development tactics, beyond the ones listed here, that firms across the industry are using successfully. Also get involved with local workforce development campaigns being organized by your local AGC chapters or groups like [NCCER](#).

Embrace new ways of supporting your current workforce

- ❖ **Consider converting your current workplace mentoring program into a sponsorship program.** Mentorship and sponsorship are different. Mentoring programs are centered on sharing insights and having conversations about work; sponsorships are designed to engage an employee in the work of their sponsor. They attend the same meetings and meet the same people as they are included in their sponsor’s work. Groups like [Ambition Theory](#) have conducted research and found that sponsorship programs are more effective in helping people, particularly women, advance in their careers and feel engaged with their firms.

“HR holds the key to a company’s culture.” - 2023 conference participant

- ❖ **Explore instituting “role sabbaticals” for your firm’s staff.** For example, have someone from accounting spend a day out in the field at a project working with the team. Or have a PM spend the day with the marketing team coming up with ways to highlight the firm’s accomplishments. These opportunities expose workers to the many opportunities for growth available to them and help them feel more connected and engaged with your firm.
- ❖ **Create and share details about the career paths available within your firm and some of the things people need to accomplish to advance along those paths.** As one participant at the conference noted, the next generation of workers is looking for a video-game approach to their career. They want to understand what steps they need to take to “level up.” Workers who understand what it takes to advance are more likely to be committed to, and stay at, a firm.
- ❖ **Offer education and training programs.** One example is [AGC Edge](#) (discussed in Section I). This program includes courses on supervision fundamentals, project management, and safety as well as specialized topics such as lean and building information modeling. You can offer these educational programs a la carte, or fold them into an in-house leadership development program like the [Frontline Leadership Training Program](#) created by Strack, Inc.
- ❖ **Consider establishing a financial resources group to help employees understand how to use their pay wisely.** Don’t assume your employees, particularly new and younger ones, understand personal finance. Helping them understand how to set and follow a budget, save for retirement, and take advantage of your benefits will help them be happier and less likely to leave.
- ❖ **Embrace frequent check-ins and reviews for new hires with programs like 30-60-90.** Schedule formal conversations with new employees at 30, 60 and 90 days to see how they are doing. You can use your performance management system to document these meetings. These check-ins can provide an opportunity to uncover and address any challenges new employees may be facing before they become the kind of problem that could prompt them to leave. This might include learning about challenges they are having getting access to transportation to and from work, or personality clashes on the job site.
- ❖ **Celebrate and recognize your employees at every level.** Find ways to share information about the many different people who contribute to your firm’s success. Create short videos about them to share internally and via social media. Feature them in your newsletter stories. Consider using an off-the-shelf collaboration tool or recognition platform to help with this. Or you could create an in-house app like the One Strack Employee Spot app created by [Strack, Inc.](#) which provides a secure platform for sharing information about the members of the team and allows for better intra-firm communication.

“Just don’t write your values, teach them.” - 2023 conference participant



Section III

Workforce Development Measures for the Frontline Teams

Supervisors, managers and foremen have the most day-to-day interaction and potentially the most ability to help with retention. They create and reinforce the work environment for both new and longer-tenure employees so empowering frontline teams with specific techniques can be a powerful weapon in your workforce development arsenal.

Frontline teams need to be informed and empowered to address workforce development challenges using techniques like these.

- Encourage project personnel to get involved in workforce development.
- Be comfortable with new workers and new ways for them to work.
- Make your jobsites more welcoming for new workers.
- Connect your people with the broader firm.

Encourage project personnel to get involved in workforce development

- ❖ **Encourage and allow newly hired members of the team to get involved with the schools they graduated from.** This could include supporting construction-related instruction at the schools and/or being involved with after-school programming on construction or career development. Having someone who students can relate to talking about, and showing, the benefits of a construction career will encourage more students to consider construction when they graduate.
- ❖ **Encourage those employees who may be nearing retirement age to consider extending their careers by teaching their skills to future workers.** Whether this means teaching high school construction or working at a local community or technical college, having your most seasoned personnel get involved with construction education will help address a critical shortage of construction educators and, almost literally, get your firm inside the school to encourage and recruit future workers.

- ❖ **Allow personnel to serve as judges or volunteers with local construction contests.** This includes events like [Skills USA](#). Having your team members involved with those contests gives them an opportunity to identify top talent and encourage them to consider a career in construction, ideally with your firm.
- ❖ **Let your teams tell their story.** Encourage people to post on their social media channels about the things they like about where they work and some of the exciting projects they may be working on. Make sure, of course, they are complying with any confidentiality requirements from the project owner and not taking images of something that could appear to look like a safety violation. But encouraging the creation of more, and authentic, content that shows the industry in a positive light may help sway potential workers to pursue careers in construction.

Be comfortable with new workers and new ways for them to work

- ❖ **Address and support the unique needs of workers from non-traditional talent pools.** Assuming your firm is willing to work with groups to help recruit people with criminal justice-involved backgrounds, like [Connect U2 Jobs](#), be willing to allow those workers extra flexibility as they adjust to their new jobs. For example, they will likely have regular meetings with parole officers. Allowing them the time needed to have those meetings will make it easier for them to stay employed. Some firms, like [Webber](#), even allow those meetings to take place on the job site.
- ❖ **Consider workers' transportation needs.** As your firm begins to successfully recruit workers from different, and potentially underserved, backgrounds, understand those workers may need more help and support to stay with your firm. One of the biggest challenges facing future workers is transportation. They may not own a car, and work on many projects typically begins before many transit systems start operating for the day. Be ready to help these workers find solutions to these kinds of challenges before they prompt them to leave. This could include finding someone they can carpool with, helping them identify local day care options or providing life coaching and support.
- ❖ **Work with HR to find safe and appropriate roles for young workers to expose them to construction career opportunities.** Most states permit firms to employ underage workers, but place limits on the type of work they can perform. Coordinate closely with your HR teams to make sure these younger workers are involved in approved work activities. This may mean extra planning up front, but the benefits of exposing future workers to the opportunities available to them in construction can really outweigh the potential extra challenge involved.

Make your jobsites more welcoming for new workers

- ❖ **Consider mistakes as a potential training opportunity.** One of the biggest retention challenges facing many firms is a job site culture that has little tolerance for mistakes. This is understandable given the safety risks involved with a project. But as your firm begins to recruit new workers from different backgrounds, understanding that the way mistakes are addressed is as important as addressing them. Instead of giving a reprimand, consider turning the mistake into a teachable moment. Explain the mistake they made and why it is a problem and show them the right way to do something. Most people want to do well at work, they just need to learn.
- ❖ **Look for ways to make construction job sites more welcoming and inclusive.** Consider adopting and implementing programs like AGC's [Culture of CARE](#). The program offers tips and resources for boosting worker retention by improving job site culture. These tips include simple things like removing pinup calendars from the job site trailer to finding ways to support more inclusive leadership.
- ❖ **Create new hire support programs.** Firms like [Strack, Inc.](#) report having success in addressing worker retention by creating support programs for new hires. Project leaders meet regularly with new hires to make sure everything is going well, find out what, if any, issues they are having and help address some of the challenges they are facing. Consider implementing something similar on your projects to help boost employee retention.

- ❖ **Host quarterly meetings of Project Supervisors, Project Managers, Senior Project Managers and Superintendents.** Several firms reported during the conference that they are bringing together their field leadership for frequent meetings to talk through any concerns they are having, address issues like company culture and just get to know each other better. These meetings allow these leaders to also talk about key personnel and proactively address concerns they may have about someone who may not be thriving.
- ❖ **Find ways to make women and other new hires feel involved by embracing sponsorships.** Seventy percent of women in construction report they have never had a woman supervisor. Embracing sponsorships, like the kind advocated by [Ambition Theory](#), can help ensure that women and other new hires have the support and involvement they need to remain engaged and demonstrate their abilities.

Connect your people with the broader firm

- ❖ **Send your people to meetings at the office and have office staff spend time at your projects.** Many firms at the conference report they have had success helping employees feel more connected and heard at their firms by mixing “suits and boots” in various meetings. This means allowing and encouraging the people on your teams to attend front office meetings and being willing to have people from the front office come and participate in key meetings and activities on your job sites.
- ❖ **Understand and communicate career paths.** Many HR teams and construction leaders are working to make the various paths to advancement at their firms more transparent. If this is being pursued at your firm, make sure to share this information with your teams and encourage them to do what is needed to advance via their preferred path. If your firm has not yet made those paths transparent, encourage them to do so.
- ❖ **Encourage your workers to take advantage of educational resources.** These could be offered by your firm, whether that is an in-house training program or something like the [AGC Edge](#). Not only will this lead to better trained and prepared workers, but it will help with retention. Workers who feel their firms are investing in their development are more likely to stay and will be better workers while they are there.

Conclusion

Next Steps in Shifting the Workforce Development Paradigm

Bringing together industry leaders working on the challenges of workforce development suggested the need for a new way to address the issues.

In this new paradigm, contractors embrace a whole-of-firm approach to workforce development. HR teams play an important role in the process and need to be empowered to embrace new approaches. At the same time, HR teams cannot solve workforce shortages on their own. They need leadership to be engaged in supporting new ideas, in setting workplace culture and in embracing new training and development opportunities. And they need field support as well in embracing the flexibility needed to recruit new workers, to make job sites more welcoming and inclusive and to embrace effective retention tactics.

This report is intended to serve as a resource for construction firms that are eager to understand new approaches and address chronic construction workforce shortages. It catalogues many of the tactics participants at the National Construction Industry HR & Workforce Conference are using to address workforce shortages. Review the measures outlined above and consider implementing the ones that seem appropriate for your firm and your situation.

There are many measures and tactics to consider. Adopting the ones that make sense to your firm is important. But embracing a whole-of-firm approach to workforce development is essential to creating the kind of environment that will allow your firm to successfully recruit and retain the workers you will need to be successful.

Want to be part of the conversation? Mark your calendar to join us October 20–22 in Denver, Colorado for the 2024 National Construction Industry HR & Workforce Development Conference. Visit workforce.agc.org to learn more.

Send a message to workforce@agc.org for contact information about any of the workforce ideas listed in this report or to be added to the AGC of America Workforce eForum.



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The **Associated General Contractors of America** works to ensure the continued success of the commercial construction industry by advocating for federal, state and local measures that support the industry; providing opportunities for firms to learn about ways to become more accomplished; and connecting them with the resources and individuals they need to be successful businesses and corporate citizens. Over 27,000 firms, including more than 6,500 of America's leading general contractors, nearly 9,000 specialty-contracting firms and almost 11,000 service providers and suppliers belong to the association through its nationwide network of chapters. Visit the AGC Web site at www.agc.org.

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