

Construction Foremen

First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades & Extraction Workers/Blue Collar Supervisors

What's this job all about?

Construction Foremen are also called First-Line Supervisors, Managers of Construction Trades, and Blue-Collar Supervisors. Whatever the title used, the people in these jobs direct, help, and train workers in physically active jobs. Construction foremen in Alaska have to be willing to work in what may be difficult weather conditions and often difficult working conditions.

They often spend time away from home, working on job sites in remote locations over a period of time. Many of their duties involve managing people, hiring, firing and evaluating other workers. They also help resolve problems between workers and they supervise and train new employees. Being a supervisor means you can combine the ability to get along with others and solve people problems with the technical knowledge needed to get the job done.

Here's what a Construction Foreman does:

- Estimate the number of workers and the amount of materials needed to complete projects.
- Create budgets.
- Analyze all requirements of a project.
- Plan and establish work goals and coordinate work.
- Keep records of how work is progressing.
- Revise tasks or reassign workers to improve progress.
- Lay out construction sites and assign workers to specific jobs.
- Order supplies and equipment.
- Discuss prices and work details with customers.
- Interpret design plans for other workers as well as inspect their work.
- Work alongside the workers they supervise.
- Perform construction tasks in addition to their supervisory duties.

How much money can I make?

Median Wage: The median wage for construction foremen varies depending on the type of worker they supervise:

<i>Type of Worker Supervised</i>	<i>Median Hourly Wage</i>
Construction and mining worker	\$34.12
Laborers and material mover	\$21.67
Mechanics, installers, and repairer	\$31.39
Production and operating worker	\$27.35
Transportation and material moving vehicle operator	\$29.39

Wages also vary by the number and type of workers supervised. In addition, supervisors who belong to a union usually receive higher wages. Construction Foremen who work full time usually receive benefits. Typical benefits include sick leave, paid vacation, and health insurance. Some employers also provide a retirement plan. Supervisors who are self-employed must provide their own insurance and retirement plan.

HELPFUL HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

A high school degree is almost always required to work as a construction foreman. You should take courses in high school that prepare you to earn a high school diploma. Below is a list of high school courses that will help prepare you. While you do not have to take all of them, you should consider them in planning for high school. Some of these courses are also available at the technical or college level. Because this occupation is so broad, the list of courses is longer than most.

Business

Introduction to Business
Business Management
General Computer Applications

Construction Trades

Construction/Carpentry
Framing Carpentry/Woodworking/Plumbing
Residential Wiring/Industrial Electricity
Electricity and Electronics

Drafting

Drafting/Blueprint Reading

English Language and Literature

English and Language Arts (Four years)
Language Arts Laboratory
English Grammar/Public Speaking
Business and Applied English

Health and Safety Education

Drivers' Education

Industrial and Technology Education

General Industrial Arts/Materials and Processes
Metal and Wood Technology
Industrial Safety and First Aid
Production Systems/Manufacturing Systems
Technology Systems/Emerging Technologies
Research and Development
Equipment Maintenance and Repair
Upholstery
Machining, Metalworking
Sheet Metal, Welding

Social Sciences and History

Business Law

How long does it take to receive training?

To work as a construction foreman, you must have at least a high school diploma or GED; have work experience in the occupation being supervised; have good communication skills; and be able to direct and motivate people. Most construction foremen learn most of their skills on the job, however, they must have completed an apprenticeship program. In addition, they must work for a few years in trades such as carpentry or plumbing and have experience as a worker. Another way to prepare for construction foremen positions is to get a degree in engineering or construction management. Many employers train new supervisors in management theory and human resources. Supervisors may also learn new computer software.

When I'm ready to work, will there be job openings?

The outlook for job openings for supervisors of construction and extraction workers is excellent. Above average growth is expected through 2014. With the building of a natural gas pipeline in Alaska, there will be a tremendous need for supervisors. Many openings in this field will also come from replacing those who retire. Nationally, the number of jobs for construction foremen is expected to grow as fast as average through the year 2014.

Please see the Training Programs section of this booklet to find out more about training in these career fields in Alaska.

