

3 Making Investment Part of the Value Proposition

Recognizing Contractors Who Invest in the Workforce

Construction project owners routinely consider safety, cost, schedule and past performance when selecting contractors. Workforce development should be part of that equation. Contractors that invest in training, apprenticeship and workforce development help build the skilled labor pipeline on which future projects depend . . .

. . . yet that investment is not always recognized when work is awarded.

When workforce development carries no value in procurement decisions, companies that invest significantly in developing their workers may compete on the same terms as those that make little or no comparable investment. Recognizing workforce development in contractor evaluation could create a powerful market incentive . . .

. . . companies would have another reason to invest in people because that investment could help them win work.

Workforce shortages are not simply a labor problem — they can potentially drive into becoming a safety problem. As staffing difficulties increase, safety performance can also deteriorate.

The data shown here illustrates that projects experiencing moderate to severe staffing difficulty had substantially higher OSHA Total Recordable Incident Rates (TRIR) than projects reporting little or no staffing difficulty.

Impact of Workforce Shortages on Safety Performance



WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

The construction industry has long recognized safety as a measure of contractor performance. Workforce development should become part of that value equation as well.

*Read all 7 recommendations in the 2026 update to Restoring the Dignity of Work
Find the full report at www.NCCER.org/research/*