

Cobb Workforce Partnership

August 5th

Building Trades, Infrastructure and Raw Materials
Discussion Guide

Industry Overview

The building trades, infrastructure, and raw materials industries employ over 24,000 people in Cobb County. The top five occupations employed by this industry group are construction laborers, carpenters, retail salespersons, electricians, and first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers.

Cobb Industry Data

| Industry | Establishments | 2014 Employment | 2014 Average Wages per Employee |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Building material and garden supply stores | 103 | 3,760 | \$51,355 |
| Construction of buildings | 546 | 4,623 | \$75,021 |
| Lumber and construction supply merchant wholesalers | 78 | 2,084 | \$86,955 |
| Specialty trade contractors | 1,038 | 13,363 | \$56,258 |

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, QCEW Program

Possible Questions

- What is the most difficult position to hire for? Why do you think that is?
- Is an aging skilled-trade workforce something that concerns you? How will the wave of future retirements impact your business?
- What key skill or skills are applicants and new employees missing? What steps, if any, have you taken to teach them these skills?
- Have you found any successful strategies for recruiting or training in difficult-to-fill positions?
- Do you have any suggestions for how the educational system can get students more excited about these careers?
- Have you tried any internship or apprenticeship programs?
- Do you find that educational programs such as Technical Colleges, four-year institutions, and other programs properly prepare students to enter the workforce?

