



Construction skilled trades have high job satisfaction levels, but recruitment is a challenge

VAUGHAN, ON, March 19, 2019 /CNW/ - Ontario's construction industry is facing labour supply issues despite the tremendous opportunities that await young people across a wide spectrum of trades. These opportunities will improve for two major reasons: (1) the wave of retirements that is anticipated over the next decade, and (2) the expectation that construction activity will increase due to the emphasis on infrastructure from Ottawa and Queen's Park, with budgets due today and April 11th respectively.

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), with support from the Ontario government, commissioned two reports that provide a road map to improve recruitment and retention of young workers. These reports are bolstered by a video series which highlights the high job satisfaction of trades who are currently employed across the Greater Toronto Area and beyond.

A firm specializing in work-related research, Job Talks, conducted a comprehensive survey of 412 skilled trades workers. The resulting report "Retaining Employees in the Skilled Trades" summarizes a comprehensive online survey that took participants, on average, 30 minutes to complete. Among the findings, author **Dr. Jon Callegher** concludes that:

- Despite the stigma associated with construction trades, nearly two-thirds (65%) of the GTA trades rated their job satisfaction between 8 and 10 on a scale of 1-10. The average score was 7.9.
- Nearly two-thirds of skilled trades workers would strongly recommend the trades to a young person.
- Furthermore, 81% of the workers enjoy a sense of financial security.
- Many survey participants also said that construction challenges their bodies and minds, that they are always learning, and that they enjoy the camaraderie and the team approach at the workplace.

The second study, "A Behavioural Economics Approach to Recruitment in Skilled Construction Trades," by **Jason Stewart** and **Lindsay McCardle**, finds that young people require more career information to make the right career decisions through an EAST framework – that is, making desired choices and actions easy, attractive, social and timely (EAST).



If these approaches are used by influencers – including teachers, guidance counsellors, parents and industry – this will improve the number of young people who will consider and enter the skilled trades at a younger age.

The report adds that behavioural economics principles can be used to better inform guidance counsellors on how they can provide more effective career guidance on the industry, including the creation of a “third wall” of career options (the first wall in the guidance office is for universities; the second for colleges; the third for the skilled trades).

RESCON president Richard Lyall said: “Unfortunately, the average age of a Canadian apprentice is 27 years old. To overcome this, influencers must become better informed about the benefits of construction careers, which are lucrative and highly satisfying, so that we can continue to tell the stories of young people thriving in this industry, like in the Job Talks video series.”

The series highlights lesser-known construction careers such as concrete and drain specialist, excavator operator, site supervisor and mobile crane operator. To date, 12 videos of a projected 50 have been released and [can be viewed here](#).

WHAT IS RESCON?

The Residential Construction Council of Ontario represents more than 200 of Ontario's residential builders. Our members build world-class high-rise, mid-rise and low-rise homes, including rental apartments and social housing buildings. Visit www.rescon.com for more.

SOURCE: Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON)

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