

IBEW 7th District / NECA Foreman Development Series

Program Overview

The Foreman Development Series is a group of (16) 3 hour modules designed to improve the quality of electrical Foremen working in our industry. The first 12 modules in this series are designed as basic training to assist any Journeyman or a beginning Foreman in the development of the skills necessary to succeed in the role of Foreman. The last 4 are more advanced modules.

The first module, Role of the Foreman, is the only prerequisite in this series. All of the other classes cover individual topics and can be taken in any order depending on the interests of the student. Each class is 2+ hours long and combines a PowerPoint slide show with an extensive lecture based on each slide. These modules encourage a lively exchange of ideas between participants with active participation and group activities throughout each class. 1st year apprentices, CW/CEs, JWs, Foremen with 20+ years of experience as well as Company owners and their management staff have completed these classes and found them to be very worthwhile. It is the interaction and sharing experiences between the students, both young and old, that really make the classes so beneficial.

The Foreman Development Series is designed to provide a broad overview of practical, hands-on fundamentals. If you work in the industry long enough you will find that most Foremen run into the same problems from job to job and come up with similar solutions. These classes are based on current industry "Best Practices"; not any particular management style or IBEW or NECA point of view. The goal of this series is to provide additional tools for the Foreman to use that will compliment both their own skills as an electrician and their company's policies. Things a student learns in these classes will have practical applications the very next day on the jobsite.

This series of classes is sponsored by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Worker's 7th District, which covers 5 states; New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. These Modules were created in 2009 by a committee of 9 people with extensive experience in the electrical industry, both running electrical construction projects and in training and teaching electrical skills.

In order to ensure the quality of the FDS program all of the trainers teaching these FDS classes are required to be certified by the 7th District. The certification process involves attending a series of (3) 3 day long "Train the Trainer" sessions in which the instructors learn additional teaching skills as well as how to put on the individual classes. They participate in each module as a student and then teach back these classes themselves and are evaluated during the process.

The Modules in the Foreman Development Series

- **The Role of the Foreman** – *Why on earth would you want to be a Foreman?* This class is an overview designed to get the participants thinking about why they might want to be a Foreman. This module also discusses the duties of the Foreman and what qualities and characteristics make up a good Foreman.
- **Project Start-Up** – *The Boss hands you a set of prints and points to an empty material trailer. What do you do now?* The goal here is to become familiar with the documents, terms, methods and procedures that are necessary to begin a new electrical project.
- **Material Management** – *Working as an electrician, have you ever had problems with materials? Absolutely!* We'll try to examine the various problems associated with ordering and handling jobsite materials, and study a series of "best practices" that will result in better material management on their project.
- **Labor Relations** – *One of my Journeymen says I'm violating her Weingarten rights. What the heck is she talking about?* The class will explore the relationship between management and the work force as it relates to hiring, setting expectations, employee attitudes, performance issues, misconduct and their Local's Collective Bargaining Agreement. It demonstrates how to use progressive discipline to improve performance and how to properly handle layoffs and terminations for cause.
- **Understanding the Estimate** – *Opps, you were the low bidder! What did your Estimator forget?* Gives a broad overview of how the electrical contractor gets work through the bid process, how the contractor arrives at his cost estimate, and how the successful estimate is then turned into the job budget of labor and material that you, the Foreman, is responsible for overseeing.
- **Man Loading & Scheduling** – *You're behind or out of time and you didn't even know it!* Participants will gain an understanding of common terms used in Scheduling, and compare a General Contractor's schedule with an Electrical Budget to learn how they relate to each other. They will use the schedule and budget to man-load a project, and then use that data to develop a Three Week Planner.

- **Managing Production** – *Can we be more competitive in today's market?* This class examines the concepts of individual versus system productivity. Participants will examine best industry practices for managing production, working more efficiently and ways to motivate and set goals for a diverse workforce including CW's/CE's.

- **Safety** – *This is not the same old, standard Safety class.* The purpose of this module is to introduce the concept of an Injury Free Environment and show how it is achieved through values and choice. It offers ways to motivate safe behavior and discusses key safety practices.

- **Communication** – *Foremen have to communicate a lot. Miscommunication can be disastrous.* We'll discuss why communication is important and explores the common barriers to good communication and how to resolve them. Participants will learn how to apply techniques to improve their daily communication, as well as how to navigate through conflict situations and difficult conversations.

- **Documentation** – *In today's world everything has to be documented.* This class will cover the various forms of documentation that a Foreman will encounter on a project. Participants gain an understanding of the importance of good documentation, what should be documented and how to do it properly.

- **Change Management** – *Everyone hates Changes but they happen on every job!* This class will discuss how and why construction changes occur, the documents involved, how they are handled, priced and tracked as well as the hidden costs and impacts of changes to the project.

- **Project Closeout** – *The job is almost over. What's left to do?* We'll look at the documentation that is important to the final stages of project completion such as As-builts, commissioning and punch lists and the importance of customer service to ensure that future projects are awarded to Union labor.

- **Understanding the Estimate, Part II** - *Building on what was covered in Part I, we'll show you how today's Estimating Software and various assemblies are used by most companies to arrive at a job bid. We'll look at both RS Means and NECA Labor Units and illustrate how to use the Estimate to determine your crew's install rates. Labor tracking, a job budget and the monthly Job cost Reports that you might get from your Project Manager will also be covered. (Approx. 3 hours)*

- **Specifications** - *Many Foremen have yet to see the new 50 Division MasterFormat Specs. (we're Div. 26 now, not Div. 16). Using a set of activities, participants will work through various parts of an authentic set of Job Specifications. We'll also talk about some of the legal issues involved. The purpose is to give students a working knowledge of the typical Spec. requirements utilized in today's construction industry. (Approx. 3 hours).*

- **Highly Effective Foremen, Part I** - *As union Foreman we are highly qualified but are we really "effective" at what we are trying to do? Utilizing some of the concepts presented in Steven Covey's book, "7 Habits of Highly Effective People", students will learn how to improve their "People" skills; working relationships, communications skills, setting expectations and team building. All of these skills are used to provide better direction and motivation for the Foremen and their workers. (Approx. 2.5 hours).*

- **Highly Effective Foremen, Part II** - *A highly effective Foreman is someone who is consistently doing all of the things that will achieve above average RESULTS on our jobs. Setting team goals, planning and time management are additional skills that a highly effective Foreman has to master. In this module we'll cover those along with the "Tough Stuff"; Accountability, Performance issues and Conflict Resolution. (Approx. 3 hours)*