

Truss/Team Building Activity

This activity introduces students to what your facility has to offer as future contractors, or employees with your company (Designers, Estimators, Quality Control, or Production), and offers some knowledge about structural building components.

Goals of this Activity

The goal of this team building activity is to get all students involved, teach them the components of a truss, how to read a drawing, and most importantly, give them a taste of what opportunities they can encounter if pursuing an internship or career with your company. Students in construction trades programs are often rushed through or don't have an opportunity to learn about what goes into the structural building components they are setting. This activity provides students with that training, so when they are faced with the drawings in the field, or have a question, they have an idea of what they are looking at.

Preparing the Materials for the Students

Begin by designing a truss using your design software to the difficulty of your choice. This is often determined by how experienced the students are. Next, have production cut all the materials and label them as displayed on the drawing. Create the plates using OSB, or another material, to represent the steel plates. Finally, bundle all materials into sets for each group to open.

How to Execute the Activity?

1. **Introduce yourself and tell them about what you and your company do**
 - a. *Tell them your story, how did you end up in this industry?*
2. **Briefly teach the students how to read a Truss Drawing**
(Different from the drawing used in the activity)
 - a. *How to find the Heel Height?*
 - b. *Where is the span located?*
 - c. *Pitch? Overhang? Plate Sizes?*
3. **Split the students into groups**
 - a. *Splitting into groups encourages competition and allows the students to work with others they typically wouldn't.*
4. **Provide each group of students with materials**
 - a. *At least 3 Drawings*
 - b. *Tape Measures*
 - c. *Truss Materials (Components and Mock Plates)*
5. **Let the groups compete to see who can finish the fastest.**
6. **Before a team can win, check their work using some examples from your company's Quality Control Program**

Feedback from Students

"Make the activity more challenging by adding random pieces that don't belong."

"Provide for teachers to use in a classroom setting for a learning tool."

"Fun and competitive!"