

The Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ) Vocational Training Programs for Workers in the Construction Industry

Language	English
Provider	Commission de la construction du Québec (CCQ)
Location	Quebec
Highlights	<p>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</p> <p>The CCQ, a joint union-employer organization, offers over a thousand training programs for the 26 trades and 30 occupations in the construction sector in Quebec.</p>
Overview	<p>HOW THE PROGRAM STARTED</p> <p>The government of Quebec granted the CCQ responsibility for training and accreditation in the construction trades in 1987. By 1988, the CCQ had begun offering training programs to workers. Training needs are determined by a complex decision-making and consultation structure involving 250 union representatives and 250 employer representatives on several committees.</p> <p>The vision of the program is concrete in that it aims to strengthen workers' competencies by meeting their learning needs and those of their industry. Currently, there is no seniority system in the industry. Workers are hired based on their skills thus making training very important. On the employer side, the vision is that highly-trained workers maintain the competitiveness of companies and the industry as a whole. Pooling resources across the industry ensures access to specific training programs regardless of budget and size of the businesses involved. Training is accessible to companies that cannot afford or implement training on their own.</p> <p>The CCQ offers training programs for 26 trades and 30 occupations including bricklayers, electricians, millwrights and welders. The course content is developed to ensure that workers develop and maintain their skills.</p>
Issues Targeted	<p>LOGISTICS</p> <p>In Québec, the Act Respecting Labour Relations, Vocational Training, and Manpower Management in the Construction Industry governs labour relations and recognizes union pluralism. Workers must choose the union that they want to belong to when they join the industry and every three years they have an opportunity to change their affiliation.</p>

In 1992, the parties negotiated a vocational training and retraining fund financed by 10 cents per hour worked and starting in August 1993, 20 cents per hour worked. There are two funds, one for the industrial sector and another for the residential sector, which now contain a total of more than \$150 million. The funds assume all direct and indirect training costs including room and board and travel costs while the participant contributes his or her time.

In 1993, the industry was divided into four sectors for the purpose of collective bargaining. One collective agreement is negotiated in each sector with a specific employer association. Each employer association has a relative weight for the ratification of the provisions common to all four agreements. One association negotiates all the common clauses of the collective agreement.

The CCQ is a joint union-employer organization that oversees training and professional development. Its decision-making and consultation structure involves:

- CCQ Board of Directors (government, employer and union)
 - Oversees all CCQ activities
- Vocational Training in the Construction Industry Committee (union-employer)
 - Oversees the overall vision of and processes associated with training programs
- Twenty-seven sectoral sub-committees (union-employer)
 - Advise on the development and review of the training and apprenticeship programs and the satisfaction of needs for upgrading
- Nine regional sub-committees (union-employer)
 - Advise on the labour needs in their respective regions and the needs for skill development among targeted workers
- Management of training centres committee (CCQ, school board, government)
 - Manages training centres dedicated to training in the construction industry and run by school boards.

The right to training is extended to individuals and companies in the industry. In practice, 90% of CCQ courses are given to individual workers and 10% are given to workers at a specific company. Participants in CCQ programs must already have a diploma in their trade and for upgrading courses, a valid competency certificate is issued by the CCQ.

Thousands of workers have received educational programs provided by the CCQ. In 2007, 17,234 workers took part in 1,515 training programs. In 2008, 19,000 workers participated in 1,800 programs. Courses run from four hours to 1800 hours depending on the type of training and whether they are initial training, on-the-job training or upgrading. Courses take place at all times of the day and week to ensure workers can fit

	<p>them into their schedules. Given the seasonal nature of construction work, many courses are delivered from January to May when the industry is less busy. Training takes place throughout the province in various locations such as training centres, the workplace or in several mobile classrooms that travel to the workers.</p>
<p>Key Features</p>	<p>OBJECTIVES AND METHODS</p> <p>The objective of training in the industry is to ensure the construction industry has sufficient high-quality, skilled workers to meet its needs. The CCQ does this through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging the development of a new generation of skilled workers • supporting the progress of apprentices • encouraging continuous training by industry workers and • maintaining and improving mechanisms that respond to the specific training needs of workers <p>Initial training is geared toward preparing participants for work and providing the foundation for ensuring an improved and adaptable workforce. The on the job training programs are aimed at increasing productivity and performance and take place at the request of specific companies. Upgrading programs aim to maintain the competitiveness of companies and the employability of the workforce.</p> <p>There is always some tension between employers and unions with regard to training programs. This tension gets resolved through the multiple unions and employer associations involved and the consultation and decision-making structures, which balance the power of various labour, employer, regional and sectoral actors. For example, one union or employer association can have a lot of power in a sectoral committee but at the regional committee, they are one of twelve and have to negotiate their position. They achieve a sufficient level of consensus for the programs to function well. The structure ensures the needs of workers and employers are met.</p> <p>Evaluations are undertaken at the macro level in terms of number of participants, costs, course completion and success rates. Evaluations are also done at the micro level with workers completing course evaluations at the end of each course. In annual evaluations, the CCQ incorporates both the macro and micro perspective in course revisions.</p> <p>The programs benefit participants, unions and employers. Participants have access to high-quality upgrading training programs at no cost. This ensures they keep their competencies up-to-date and can secure their employment in the industry. The union strengthens the voice of workers in determining the type and quality of work-related training. Furthermore, the entire structure ensures union members receive regular and high quality training. Employers in turn have access to a highly skilled workforce.</p>

	<p>CCQ training programs address systemic barriers that may prevent workers from accessing training. Cultural ethnicity, lack of formal education, geographical constraints and literacy are considered when reaching out to diverse groups of workers. For instance, the CCQ provides sign-language interpretation in courses where a participant has a hearing impairment. A special training centre for Aboriginal workers in the construction industry considers the diversity and needs of Aboriginal cultures. A program has been implemented where Aboriginal course participants get to know each other and connect with their cultures over a week spent in the woods just prior to the course. The following week, the CCQ endeavours to place participants in the same classes. If an Aboriginal participant cannot participate in the week-long pre-course session, a support worker stays in touch with him or her throughout the course. As for women, the CCQ has found that proportionally, the same number of women enroll in training programs as men in the industry. The CCQ, through Emploi-Québec, provides financial support for participants who are paying for child care during courses.</p>
<p>Key Results</p>	<p>IMPACTS OF THE PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES</p> <p>The programs primarily focus on functional and technical skills development with 75% of the programs being hands on and participatory in the particular trade the course covers. For example, a bricklayer could take a 30 hour course on constructing and repairing fireplaces and stove bases or a 45 hour course on an introduction to welding.</p> <p>The CCQ also includes a basic skills training component in their courses. Instructors, as part of the initial evaluation of the course participants, assess basic skills such as reading, writing and math. If any participants require basic skills training, the instructor is authorized to add an additional 15 hours to the course in order to give the whole class basic skills training. This assures the success of all participants in the course and has a broader impact on the worker's work and personal life.</p> <p>In terms of critical thinking and social analysis, some of the courses deal with broader issues in the industry such as environmental and social practices. One course covers new practices in sustainable development and another one deals with quality management programs such as ISO standards. The CCQ also offers programs in management, which cover communication skills and group work. Workers from all trades can take these courses. In the longer trades courses, the worker has the opportunity to look critically at the technical skills they are learning. This could involve questioning the approach that is being taken and if the result will respond to the goals of the industry or not. The courses also provide an informal forum for questioning the practices of particular employers who are not following proper procedures or regulations as there are participants from different companies across Quebec.</p>

	<p>The participants' labour market viability is strengthened through these courses. The courses are not company specific, but oriented toward changes in the overall industry. This ensures courses reflect the diversity of companies in which workers are employed. Training becomes increasingly important in an industry where moving from job to job is the norm.</p> <p>One aspect of work related learning that could be improved is developing stronger learning relationships on job-sites between the apprentice and journeypersons. This would ensure material learned in training gets integrated into participants' specific work sites.</p>
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Sectors	Construction
Projects	Union-Led Work-Related Learning
Sponsors	Trade Union, Labour federation or Labour-affiliated Group
Target Audiences	Workers
Initiative Types	Program
Stakeholder Involvement	<p>UNION AND EMPLOYER</p> <p>The unions in the industry are the Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD-Construction), the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN-Construction), the Fédération des travailleurs du Québec (FTQ-Construction), the Conseil provincial du Québec des métiers de la construction International (CPQMCI) and the Syndicat québécois de la construction (SQC).</p> <p>The employer associations in the industry are the Association de la construction du Québec (ACQ), Institutional and Commercial Association de la construction du Québec (ACQ), Civil Engineering and Roadwork Association des constructeurs de routes et grands travaux du Québec (ACRGTTQ), Residential Association provinciale des constructeurs d'habitations du Québec (APCHQ) and Association des entrepreneurs en construction du</p>

	Québec (AECQ).
Sources	<p>FURTEHR REFERENCES</p> <p>CCQ website: http://www.ccq.org/F_Formation.aspx?sc_lang=en&profil=Travailleur</p> <p>Charest, Jean et Chantal Dubeau. 2003. «Organisation du système de formation continue dans l'industrie de la construction au Québec – partenariat et mutualisation», Gazette du Travail, Vol. 6 no 3, 62-74. (Available in English as: «Structure of the Life-Long Learning System within the Quebec Construction Industry – Partnership and Mutualization», Workplace Gazette, Vol. 6 no 3, 71-82). www.crimt.org/Publications/GT_Vol6_No3_2003.pdf (French)</p> <p>CCQ's training fund: http://www.ffic.ca/ (French)</p>
Conclusion	<p>WHAT'S NEXT</p> <p>Program funding is negotiated into collective agreements, which ensures a certain level of sustainability in the training programs. The joint training undertaken by the CCQ is one of the most successful examples of extensive, industry-wide work-related training.</p>