



# FIELD LEADERS EDUCATION (FLE)

FOR CONSTRUCTION

John Koontz



**Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Inc.**

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## Field Leaders Education (FLE) Seminars

Field leaders of all experience levels will find great value in these seminars. They are specifically directed to junior and senior level field leadership personnel such as “future” foremen, foremen, general foremen, project superintendents, general superintendents, etc.

**FLE 100:** 4 hours

### Planning Skills for Foremen

Effective planning makes projects more productive and profitable. This session covers three areas of planning: turnover meetings, pre-construction planning, and short interval planning. Learn the fundamentals of effective turnover meetings necessary to transfer information from estimators to the project team. Discuss how the foreman can positively influence project outcome through sound and proactive planning, and learn the fundamentals of successfully pre-planned projects. Focus on the necessity of continuous project planning using short interval planning and on scheduling to recognize upcoming project needs.

**FLE 101:** 4 hours

### Productivity Improvement for Mechanical Projects

Great project management, by both the foreman and project manager, is primarily responsible for creating excellent productivity on every project. Due to the endless number of variables, which negatively effect worker efficiency, excellent productivity is the project team’s greatest challenge. Productivity also has the greatest positive or negative impact on project and company profitability. Excellent productivity requires proactive, diligent, and detailed planning by the project manager and foreman at each step of the project. In this session, the instructor will provide proven methods and practices for creating, controlling, and improving project productivity on all types of projects. The following topics (and others) will be presented and discussed in this class:

- Material handling practices that guarantee improved jobsite productivity
- Understanding “average” productivity and the “typical” construction site work day
- Identifying, managing, and controlling recoverable lost time
- Understanding the differences between management-caused lost time and worker-caused lost time
- Understanding the differences and the important connection between punctuality and productivity
- Optimum crew size and its effect on productivity
- The relationship between planning, productivity, and profitability
- Planning activities that have huge impacts on productivity
- Identifying and controlling the internal and external factors that affect productivity
- Fabrication, preassembly, tagging, bagging, and its effect on productivity

**FLE 102:** 4 hours

### The Foreman’s Role in Project Documentation

Examine the role of the jobsite supervisor in creating daily, indisputable project documentation. Review the basic types of and uses for project documentation and learn methods to improve documentation effectiveness. The steps for planning and implementing the documentation process for a mechanical construction project will be reviewed.

**FLE 103:** 4 hours

### Managing Labor: Coding, Tracking, and Forecasting

The contractor’s primary risks in the construction process are: estimating, budgeting, managing, and controlling project labor costs. You will explore the jobsite supervisor’s role in managing and controlling mechanical project labor costs. The jobsite supervisor’s unique partnership with the mechanical project manager in timekeeping, coding, tracking, and forecasting project labor hours and costs will be stressed.

**FLE 104:** 4 hours

### Essential Management Skills for the Project Foreman

Successful journeymen with unique abilities, but with little or no management training, are frequently promoted to “foreman” and lead crews of workers on mechanical projects. This session explores basic management skills relative to the position of jobsite foreman. Understand essential traits, skills, and behaviors that allow a foreman to more effectively manage crews. Topics covered include: the relationship between leadership and management; management ability vs. technical savvy; consistency in managing others; the importance of organization and standardization; motivating others to perform; delegation skills; and working with difficult people.

**FLE 105:** 4 hours

### Managing Change at the Jobsite

Review the jobsite supervisor’s role in managing the change order process. Discuss the negative impact of change orders on the completion of the original scope of work and the methods for minimizing and managing these impacts. Topics include:

- Foreman as “guardian of the scope of work”
- The real costs of change orders
- The project owner’s perspective on change orders
- Methods for managing and preventing productivity loss on change orders
- The importance of the early identification of change orders
- The effects of overtime on productivity
- Managing change orders with a strong foreman/project manager team
- The importance of solid change order documentation
- What a typical contract says about change orders
- Managing time and material change orders
- Managing morale and motivation on projects plagued with numerous change orders

**FLE 106:** 4 hours

### Successful Survival of Project Closeout

Project’s end is often a difficult time for the project foreman and his crews. The project looks complete, but often has numerous items that must be completed to meet contract requirements. The project team has often lost the momentum and energy it possessed earlier in the project. This session provides basic skills for a successful project closeout. A discussion of innovative methods used by MCAA contractors to help reduce the typical end of project profit/productivity drain is included.

**FLE 107:** 4 hours

### **Critical Leadership Skills for Project Foremen**

Successful project supervision requires strong leadership skills. Most foremen possess some degree of instinctive leadership skills, but learning additional leadership skills can improve overall leadership effectiveness. Learn the difference between being in charge and being an effective leader. Understand the critical leadership skills of an effective foreman. Topics to be discussed include:

- Defining leadership and dispelling the myths of leadership
- The difference between leadership and management
- Making the emotional connection between teams and leaders
- The relationship between leadership and motivation
- Developing effective listening skills
- Creating an atmosphere of trust
- Workers vs. followers

**FLE 108:** 4 hours

### **Everyday Negotiating Skills for Jobsite Supervisors**

Mechanical foremen spend a significant portion of each day negotiating with subordinates, general contractors, construction managers, owners, subcontractors, vendors, and other trades. They regularly negotiate for space, time, access, sequence, hoisting equipment, answers to questions, and the like—all things that have a significant direct impact on project success—yet they often have no formal training in negotiating. Jobsite supervisors who improve their negotiating abilities are more likely to create better results. To that end, this session will provide jobsite supervisors with basic skills to improve their negotiating abilities and increase their effectiveness and comfort level when negotiating. The session will include, but is not limited to, the following negotiating topics: importance of preparation, negotiating styles, reading the other side, how to concede, strategies for win-win, building relationships, negotiating price, questioning skills, and listening skills.

**FLE 109:** 4 hours

### **Managing Your Subcontractors**

Subcontractors represent a significant portion of most mechanical contracts, and the performance of your subcontractors is a direct reflection of your own performance in the eyes of an owner, construction manager, or general contractor. On many projects the on-site foreman becomes so absorbed by his own specific work activities that he loses sight of the fact that the subcontractor's work is also a part of their company's contract. The project foreman's effective daily on-site management of subcontractors is required to ensure a successful quality project that is completed on time and within budget. This session will include the following topics:

- Shared management responsibility with the project manager
- Thoroughly understanding the subcontractor's scope of work
- Planning and scheduling with your subcontractors
- Understanding subcontract risk
- Managing subcontractor change orders
- Proper communication with your subs
- Developing strong relationships with your subs
- Managing subcontractor safety
- Subcontractor coordination
- Subcontractor documentation

**FLE 110:** 4 hours

### **Practical Time Management Skills for Project Foremen**

The effective management of time is one of a jobsite supervisor's greatest challenges and is often the root cause of their greatest failures. Construction productivity experts have known for many years that journeyman productivity has a direct correlation to a foreman's effectiveness. A foreman's effectiveness is also directly correlated to how efficiently and wisely they use their own time. This session will focus on the practical time management methods and techniques a foreman can easily use to increase management efficiency and effectiveness. The session will include the following time management topics:

- Methods and tricks of great time managers
- Utilizing quiet time
- Time ownership attitude
- Effective delegation
- Managing the telephone
- Task prioritization
- Daily and weekly planning
- Using calendars and lists
- Managing meetings
- Organization and standardization
- Managing drop-in visitors
- Paper handling system
- Creating your own personal time management system

**FLE 111:** 4 hours

### **Qualities, Characteristics, and Habits of the Industry's Best Field Leaders**

Why are some field leaders consistently more effective and successful than their peers in our industry? What are the qualities, methods, and practices that separate a good foreman from a great foreman? While age, experience, attitude, and talent are important factors in a field leader's success, most of the qualities, characteristics, and habits of the industry's greatest are skills that can be learned over time by any anyone who has the attitude, aptitude, and sincere desire to improve and succeed. This seminar focuses on the "best practices" of great foremen regarding the following topics:

- Servant Leadership
- Coaching & Managing
- Motivation
- Planning
- Project Closeout
- Creating a Safety Culture
- Partnerships with Project Managers
- Documentation
- Customer Relationships
- Fabrication Usage and Management
- Teaching and Mentoring
- Communication
- Negotiation
- Professionalism



**About the Instructor:**

**John R. Koontz**, MCAA's Director for Project Management Education, has almost four decades of wide-ranging mechanical industry experience that includes contracting, academics, and consulting. He is a former Tenured Associate Professor in Purdue University's Department of Building Construction Management. He is also the founder and former director of Purdue's Mechanical Construction Management Specialization Program, and is the founder of the first MCAA student chapter at Purdue in 1993.

In addition to his academic career, he spent 15 years in the employment of MCAA contractors in a variety of positions including senior project manager, project manager, project engineer, and estimator. Koontz's family heritage of long-term UA family members (grandfather, great uncle, and father, and others) provides a sincere and deep-rooted pride, interest, and concern for the future success of all parties involved in union mechanical construction.

John has a Bachelor's Degree in Building Construction Management from Purdue University and a Master's Degree in Construction Management from Washington University in St. Louis. Since leaving Purdue in 1999 to join the MCAA full time, John has been travelling throughout America speaking, teaching, training, consulting, and writing about all subjects related to project management and the mechanical contracting industry.

**Contact Information:**

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**About the National Education Initiative (NEI):**

MCAA will bring lifelong learning directly to you! The National Education Initiative Seminars are our best MCAA programs—brought to your local association or even your company. Our goal is to provide ongoing and advanced education and training in support of individual and association growth across the mechanical contracting industry. We offer standard and custom-designed classes exclusively for your association or company's unique needs and challenges. If you need training quickly or have a large group, we are here to help!

**For more information or to schedule a course:**

Contact **Priya Nirmal** at **301-869-5800** or [pnirmal@mcaa.org](mailto:pnirmal@mcaa.org).



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