



Belonging and Excellence for All (BE4ALL) is a joint effort by SMART, SMACNA, and the ITI to create an industry-wide culture where everyone is welcome and belongs, including those from historically underrepresented groups, and where we all strive for the highest standards of performance and professionalism, resulting in a thriving unionized sheet metal industry that affirms the dignity and worth of us all. These Toolbox Talks are in support of this mission.

BE4ALL Toolbox Talk

Working Well with Non-Union Workers from other Trades

As union members of the sheet metal trade, we can all identify reasons why being a member of our union is the only option for us. Many of us would say, the union provides better pay, benefits, and working conditions. Other reasons could be job security, collective bargaining power, or community and solidarity. Regardless of the reasons we choose to belong to our union, there may be times on a job site when we encounter other trades, or even other sheet metal workers, who are affiliated with the non-union.

Being a non-union trade worker does not always mean that someone is against unions. Sometimes a worker may not have had the opportunity to learn about unions or has been misinformed. Some people may not personally know someone belonging to a union or have not had exposure to working around unionized workers, leading to a lack of understanding. Despite not belonging to a union, they are not by default an adversary to the union, nor are they less valuable to their trade.

Promote a culture of Excellence and Professionalism. As the professionals that we aim to be, it is our duty to be ambassadors of the union. Treating others with fairness and respect will promote a positive image of unions. In turn, this can potentially create an environment where the non-union workers may change their perspective about who we are and why we choose to belong to a union. Our union will benefit through future organizing efforts as well as recruitment and retention efforts, while our contractors will benefit from the positive job site climate.

How can you show respect to non-union workers and be an ambassador of the union?

- Always model professionalism and excellence.
- Introduce yourself and ask them their name.
- Maintain open dialogue, without judgment, by engaging in friendly conversations and open discussions about work related matters.
- Do not refer to non-union workers using derogatory slang or name calling.
- Do not assume that because they are non-union that they are anti-union.
- Educate them respectfully about the benefits of the union.
- Avoid stereotyping; everyone has different motivating factors for doing what they do. The reasons that you belong to a union may not align with someone else's reasoning.
- Offer support. Provide information about the apprenticeship or contact information of a union representative or organizer if they are interested. Don't forget that every SMART member is an organizer!



Remember, we all have a reason for going to work.

Everyone just wants to go to work, earn an honest day's pay, feel a sense of accomplishment and provide for themselves and their families. Knowing that we have this in common between the union and non-union, we should take every opportunity to promote a positive image of our union by displaying our skill, efficiency, professionalism, and excellence. Let's create an atmosphere that makes them ask themselves: why don't I belong to a union?

Staff Conversation & Notes:

How can treating non-union workers respectfully benefit the union sheet metal industry in the long run?

What can I do to show respect to a non-union worker on the job?



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BE4ALL Toolbox Talk Participation Sheet

Employer: _____


Presenter: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

Participant	Initials

Participant	Initials



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