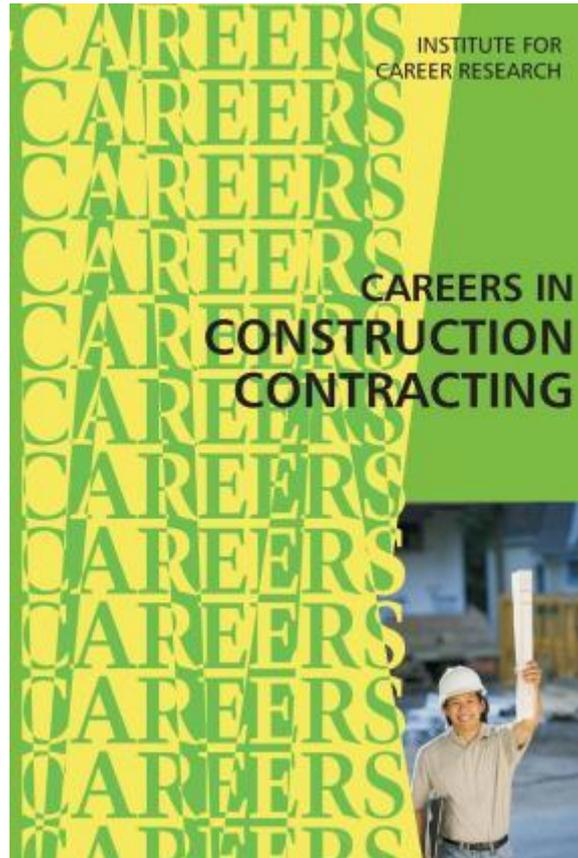


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CHOOSING A CAREER SHOULD BE AN exciting experience. The first thing you need to do is ask yourself a few questions. What do you like to do? What are you good at? The idea is to find the career that answers both questions. Do you like to work with your hands? Can you keep track of a thousand details? Are you a good negotiator? If so, a career in construction contracting may be for you. Construction contracting is a fundamental business. Almost everything requires some kind of construction. People live in houses and apartments, they work in office buildings and factories, they shop in small stores and enormous shopping malls, and they drive on roads to get there. Construction contractors build all of these things. Construction is so important to the overall state of the economy that the number of homes being built in a month - a statistic known as "housing starts" - can make or break Wall Street. Many huge industries make products primarily for construction, including lumber, concrete, gypsum, copper and steel. Construction contracting is an all-encompassing business that includes trades ranging from carpentry to masonry, plumbing to electrical, steelwork to painting. Any of these trades are excellent avenues into the construction contracting business, and all are explored in detail in other Career Reports in this series. Although this report will touch upon these trades and a few others, it is mainly concerned with careers in construction management and what you will need to do to achieve that goal for yourself. Construction is notoriously susceptible to fluctuations in the overall economy. When times are good, people and businesses expand by investing in new homes and commercial buildings. When times are not so good they tend to hunker down in the spaces they already have and wait for the economic storm to pass. The construction contracting business may grow rapidly for a few years, then flatten out or even dip a bit, and then grow again. Do not bother to try to time the job market as you plan your own future. There will always be opportunities.

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