



# The Merit Shop Philosophy

## Why One-Time Union Contractors Are Now Merit Shops

- Restrictive work policies imposed by Unions
- No freedom in how employers run their businesses
- Freedom to invest profits back into the business
- Ability to reward employees based on merit rather than tenure
- Negative union tactics
- Greenmail tactics
- Desire for fair competition
- Blatant effort by unions to increase operating costs for open shops
- Distaste for Salting: When a union worker applies for work with open/merit shop with the sole purpose of organizing the workforce
- Efforts to entice or "goad" an employer into making a mistake and committing unfair labor practices
- Union membership costs are high because of health care costs, possible loss of pension contributions and various dues/fees that employees never see

### What You Can Do As An Employee :

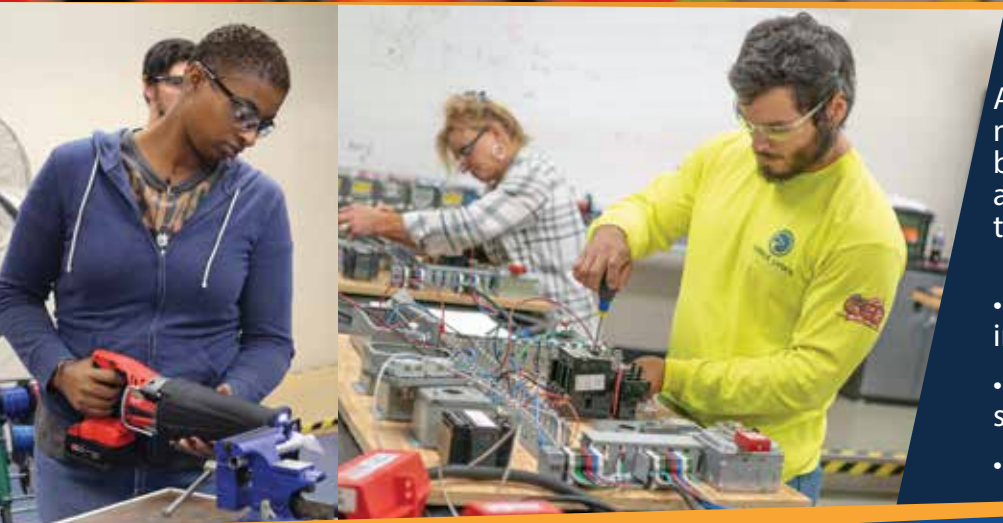
- Be informed
- Maintain your freedom of choice
- Question promises and get them in writing
- Read the fine print and don't be fooled into signing a Union Authorization card
- Talk to your supervisor or employer if you have questions

### Freedom of Choice for Employers and Employees:

- Build on the strengths of your workforce
- Invest in your workfroce
- Focus on the customer and think like a strategic business
- Training improves a craftsperson's value
- Progress is achieved by the mutual efforts of employees and management without third-party influence or interference

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## What is a Merit Shop?

A Merit Shop, also called an Open Shop, is a firm or organization in which management retains the right to perform hiring, promotion, salary adjustments, bonuses and termination based on the laws of the state and federal government, along with its evaluation of an individual's ability to accomplish the tasks assigned to them.

### Quick Look: Merit Shop Benefits

- Direct communication between employees and management without intervention—no 3rd party intermediary
- Employees rewarded on merit, initiative, and quality of work—not tenure or seniority
- No dues to local, state, and national union bosses

## Your Rights As An Employee

- You have the right to NOT join a union
- You can reject union membership without fear of losing your job
- You have the right to be free from union dues, fees and assessments
- You can work in the job of your choice without interference from any union or outside group
- You have the legal right to sign a union authorization card but also have the legal right NOT to sign one. A union authorization card can be legally binding, removing your freedoms in the workplace
- Over 90% of private business employees have chosen to be merit-based, or non-union

## Similarities & Differences

<b>Union:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Works Jobs</li> <li>• Private Works Jobs</li> <li>• Prevailing Wage</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Health &amp; Welfare</li> <li>• Pension</li> <li>• Dues</li> <li>• Targeting Fees</li> <li>• Assessments</li> <li>• Industry Advancement Fee (up to \$9 an hour)</li> </ul>	<b>Merit Shop:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Works Jobs</li> <li>• Private Works Jobs</li> <li>• Prevailing Wage</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Health &amp; Welfare</li> <li>• Pension</li> <li>• <b>No Dues</b></li> <li>• <b>No Targeting Fees</b></li> <li>• <b>No Assessments</b></li> <li>• <b>No Industry Advancement Fee</b></li> </ul>
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## The Benefits of Merit Shops

- 86% of construction work in the USA was done by merit shops in 2017
- WECA members and other merit shop contractors pay the same wages and benefit contributions, or higher, for apprentices and journeymen on Prevailing Wage jobs as union shops
- WECA's Electrician Trainee program, Apprenticeship programs, Continuing Education and Custom Training Courses are all sponsored and made available by WECA members
- Merit Shops do not limit employees' rights to do side work
- Merit Shops place workers in jobs based on their skills. and training instead of seniority
- Merit Shops have no dues, no targeting fees, no assessments fees, and no industry advancement fees (up to \$9/hour)
- Merit shop contractors can work on the same types of public works jobs, private works jobs, and prevailing wage jobs as union contractors.

## The Drawbacks of Unions

- Union membership has declined from 13.5% in 2000 to 10.7% in 2017.
- Unions cannot guarantee higher wages, job security, training, or business security
- Collective bargaining agreements can result in fewer opportunities to compete for work
- Unions can fine their employees and contractors and hold union trials
- Union workers are treated the same, regardless of performance or skill
- It's difficult to leave unions once you're in
- 2019 International Dues for Journeymen= \$40/mo
- Working Dues: 1.5% to 2% from hourly wage
- Market Recovery Dues range from 3% to 8%
- Monthly dues must be paid even if you are laid off
- Working assessments usually 2% of gross wages
- Targeting varies from 1% to 8% of gross wages

## True of All Employers

- Employers can't make unlawful statements about unionization
- Employers can't reject union member's application or unfair labor practice charges may be attached
- Employers can't discriminate against an applicant on the basis of union affiliation
- Employers can't interfere with, restrain or coerce employees