

The IBEW SPARQ

A quarterly newsletter highlighting IBEW values

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Putting IBEW Excellence on Display

At the IBEW, professionalism means different things to different workers. But in every case, it boils down to this: When our superior training and work ethic shine through; when we show our customers and stakeholders what IBEW excellence is all about—that's professionalism.

Professionalism can be showing up for an appointment on time and explaining the problem and how you'll fix it. Or maybe it's putting in that extra effort to satisfy an upset customer when he or she reaches a call center with a problem.

On a construction site, it's putting in a full day's work for a full day's pay and getting the job done right the first time.

For railroad members, professionalism is working safely and in a way that gets passengers and cargo where it's going without disruption.

It's also working together with management in pursuit of common goals and remembering that we're often the public face of the companies we work for.

When our utility members are the first on the ground after a natural disaster, as we saw with the California wildfires and Hurricane Florence last year, we're the professionals helping those in need.

It isn't enough to be competent. Putting our best face forward and showing why we're the right choice for a job is why companies and



Photo credit: Local 1245/John Storey

customers keep coming back to us. They recognize our professionalism.

Another plus for professionalism is that non-union workers notice and want to be a part of it.

East Windsor, N.J., Local 827 recently organized workers at three Altice USA locations in the state—Newark, Lodi and Oakland—which means more than 200 new members when contracts are finalized. The Altice workers noticed the professionalism of IBEW Verizon technicians, who they'd often run into on the job.

Altice has successfully fought attempts to organize at other locations, but credit for Local 827's success goes to persistence and to the newly organized members.

Ultimately, professionalism is about perception. It's about how other people see us and, with the right attitude and a lot of hard work, we can make our IBEW professionalism pay—with higher wages, bigger jobs, better benefits and more work opportunities.



What does SPARQ mean to you? Have an idea for the newsletter? Email theSPARQ@ibew.org



New Members Make Lasting Impression

Professionalism is crucial for IBEW members working in telecommunications. Often, we're the first employees from a company that our customers encounter, so we make a lasting impact. Ensuring that the first interaction is a positive one allows our partners to thrive and allows us to negotiate wages and benefits that are the best in the industry.

Cranston, R.I., Local 2323 understood this while training new members hired to work in New England call centers. Most had never been union members before and had never encountered anything like the Code of Excellence.

Local 2323 leaders stressed to new members the importance of providing the highest-quality customer service.

Instructors spent time on accountability and professionalism, teaching the 8-for-8 motto—working a full day's work for a full day's pay—and reminding members that if they're delayed arriving to work or have an emergency, they should notify their supervisor immediately.

With so many call-center jobs being moved to low-wage locations overseas in recent years, it's critically important to show our value to the companies we work for; and that starts by showing up on time, working a full 8-hour shift and providing superior quality service every time we answer the phone. The result is that we put ourselves in a



better position to fight for the superior wages and benefits that support our members and their families.

That's what professionalism is all about: IBEW members focusing on the consumer and doing the job right. It's the IBEW way.

SPARQ GOES LOCAL



The BP Oil Refinery in Whiting, Ind.
Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697 made a Code of Excellence presentation for M.J. Electric, a longtime signatory contractor in the area, to secure a bid at the local BP Oil Refinery. The presentation was a success; the contractor went on to use the Code to win the BP bid. The Code resonated, and now IBEW members at M.J. Electric are on the job at the refinery.