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What Is Extra-Board Employment?

by Andrew Latham, Demand Media



The railroad industry uses extra board workers to cover for regular workers.

The term extra-board employment describes a pool of workers who are available to cover for regular employees. These workers are employed under special terms and usually do not enjoy all the benefits and entitlements of regular workers. However, the hourly wage of an extra-board worker is often higher than the hourly wage of a regular worker with the same job description.

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Railroad Industry

Extra-board workers are widely used in the railroad industry. They are called when management needs extra workers because additional trains are included in a schedule, regular crews have not had the minimum rest time set by law, or individual workers call in sick or with some other type of emergency.

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Extra-board workers are also used when regular workers are available but management wants to reduce the cost of overtime. A regular employee working overtime might receive up to two or even three times her standard hourly wage. If you have a pool of extra-board workers available, you can save money by calling them in instead of offering overtime. For example, according to a report by the United States Fire Administration, the Anderson Township Fire and Rescue department in Cincinnati, Ohio, reduced their overtime costs by 47 percent when they started using an extra-board system.

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### Terms

Extra-board workers must agree to different contract terms than regular workers. For instance, an extra-board worker must agree to changing work schedules at short notice. For instance, regular workers for the the Utah Transit Authority will receive up to three shift changes a year, while a extra-board workers in the same organization do not know what schedule they will have until 4 p.m.the day before their shift.

### Seniority

In certain industries, especially in the transportation sector, regular workers start as extra-board workers and work their way into a regular position. In these cases, you become a regular worker through seniority. This is especially useful in businesses that require a pool of workers willing to change shifts and schedules at short notice.

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### About the Author

Andrew Latham has worked as a professional copywriter since 2005 and is the owner of LanguageVox, a Spanish and English language services provider. His work has been published in "Property News" and on the San Francisco Chronicle's website, SFGate. Latham holds a Bachelor of Science in English and a diploma in linguistics from Open University.

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