



# The Edison Planning United Newsletter

## 1-10-20

### A Designer's Voice





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*Written by a proud designer who wishes to remain anonymous until after we win representation*

Did you know that there is a designer 3 position in the company? Although the role exists, it is an unrealistic and unattainable goal, so much so that you can work your entire career in the planning department and never see a single one. If I wanted to continue my career as a designer, what opportunities are available to me when the designer 3 role isn't even an option? Why is the designer role treated like a dead-end career path by the company and why is there zero effort put into training and developing designers?

As a designer, if I wanted to become a planner, I would have to qualify for and pass the planner tests, get selected by the hiring manager in HR, interview, and hopefully get selected for the role. I am a crucial member of the planning department and have worked alongside and even advised and trained new planners but my time and experience as a designer does not qualify me for a planner 1 position. Designers are required to gain the same knowledge as planners in order to identify any potential errors yet our experience does not count towards the planner role.

If I am a designer 2 and I applied to become a planner 1, I would get a call from HR reminding me that this is a demotion and there would be a cut in pay yet I would not qualify for the position. I would have to jump through the same hoops a new hire with zero experience in planning would have to go through to get hired. This isn't right.

The designer career path should naturally qualify you for the planner position, should you choose to do so. Even though we know the planner role and are experienced in the knowledge and software required for the job, we will be rejected because of nepotism. John Doe – son/friend/husband/cousin of a manager with no utility experience will get the job over you, leaving you to train them when they get to your department because John Doe does not know DM, AUD, etc and you are the expert. You train them because you fear losing your job but eventually you'll lose the morale to keep fighting for a position you are more-than qualified for but will never get.

I love being a designer. I shouldn't have to consider becoming a planner just to advance my career or seek higher pay. If I put in the years, learn the tools, and prove my aptitude, I should be able to advance within my trade. Remember that designer 3 position I mentioned earlier? Where are they?

Why did I sign a card to be represented by ESC? I know that with a union contract, we can negotiate clear pathways to promotion that will reward my experience, professionalism, and expertise and also provide me with more on the job training. With a union contract, the designer 3 role will no longer be a myth, it can be an attainable goal if I choose to go that route. I want to stop living in fear and have a voice that represents our planning department. I want to be confident in speaking up about departmental decisions. I want to be in control of my future, allow my PDP to actually reflect my raise and bonus rather than be a chess piece that my managers and their managers get to move around at their own volition based on their perception of my worth.

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**[Sign the ESC Local 20 Authorization Card!](#)**

**Already signed? Ask your coworkers to sign today!**

**<https://www.joinlocal20.org/edison/edison-authorization-card/>**

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We want each and every Field Tech, Designer, Estimator, and Planner to be informed. If you need help talking with your coworkers or want to join the organizing effort, please contact your ESC organizer:

Desert and Rurals: Jerome Christensen [jchristensen@ifpte20.org](mailto:jchristensen@ifpte20.org)

Orange: Jonathan Wright [jwright@ifpte20.org](mailto:jwright@ifpte20.org)

Metro East: Liz Sparks [esparks@ifpte.org](mailto:esparks@ifpte.org)

Metro West, North Coast, and San Joaquin: Oraiu Amoni [oamoni@ifpte20.org](mailto:oamoni@ifpte20.org)

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