



EDiS Company Celebrates Women In Construction: An Interview with DJ Lowe

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We sat down with our own DJ Lowe to listen to her experiences and insights as Document Coordinator at EDiS Company. What have we learned, where do we see the construction industry heading, how can we empower and encourage more young women to enter this world of exciting opportunity?



Q.: What is your role at EDiS Company? What is the most challenging aspect of your role?

A.: *My role at EDiS is the Document Coordinator, which involves working hand-in-hand with contractors, architects, Project Managers, Operations Managers, and everyone in between to process documents in a timely fashion. I am also the person who schedules and oversees our*



company's outreach programs to local schools and colleges. I was offered this position 19 years ago while working at the New Castle County Courthouse as a Project Engineer. EDiS Company saw my ability to manage over 3,300 submittals simultaneously and knew I was right for this job.

The most challenging aspect of my role has to be EDiS Company's signature CloseOut procedure which is all about perfectly accurate documentation and follow-up. My main goal is making our clients happy, and my background in forensic studies serves me well in that my attention to detail remains a cornerstone in achieving that goal. I continuously remind myself that behind every barrier I face, a powerful breakthrough is bound to follow.

Q.: How did you know construction was what you wanted to pursue as a career? What was your 'Ah-ha' moment? Who or what influenced you to pursue a career in construction?

A.: I didn't find my 'Ah-ha' moment because it found me first. I believe that construction management has its own DNA, and if you want to build, create, and design, then embracing a career in this industry will come easily. I am analytical by nature and know, just like my experiences in forensic studies, examining the issues to determine the findings is equally applicable to the science of construction. I examined my greatest strengths – my curiosity, my attention to detail, and my drive for results – and came to the conclusion that these qualities align with the requirements of being successful in the construction management industry.

Q.: How has the workplace culture changed since you began your career in construction and what changes would you like to see happen?

A.: The percentage of women entering and staying in the construction industry is growing in this country because this sector is facing a shortage of labor. The changes I see happening are a product of companies like EDiS investing in the younger generation of workers and that generation is much more diverse than years before. I am overjoyed to see equal opportunities being extended to more minorities, genders and ages because it was less so when I first entered the job market. One aspect I would like to see change is for young people to give project management a chance early on and to invest themselves in securing a good education that will put them on that trajectory. The tools are all available, but it is up to you to pick them up and chisel out your future.

Q.: What is a key resource for someone who is interested in a career in STEM, or more specifically, construction? What organizations, websites, or opportunities empower women entering this career and how can young women use these to their advantage?

A.: Learn how to become a leader. Go to seminars and meetings. Take the initiative in your life or someone else will. I was fortunate in knowing what I wanted to pursue in my career early on and I am glad I followed through with it because I cannot imagine myself elsewhere. As far as



organizations go, try the National Association for Women in Construction (NAWIC) and read online or print publications like Equal Opportunity and Woman Engineer.

Q.: What advice do you wish you had going into a career in construction? What would you tell a young woman just entering undergrad as a STEM major?

A.: Find your tools and use them. Knowing how to track an opportunity and then follow up with contacts would have ensured that I had the most reliable knowledge to act upon. Keeping an updated list of your contacts and checking in with them will go a long way in serving your success, no matter what industry you end up in, and will teach you about the opportunities available if you pursue them earnestly.

Locate a mentor and learn everything you can from them. When you have everything to take in, just remember that no question is too small or dumb. It is very important to keep that in mind because you need all the help you can get when starting out and asking questions will help you determine your success on all future endeavors. Thinking back on what inspires me to put my everything into my work, I look to all the friends and colleagues who helped me get to where I am today. We cannot build buildings by ourselves. We have to work together.