



# Women in A/E/C Networking

## Notes from the A/E/C Women's Networking Event: *Women Mentoring Women Leaders - Session 1*

**Meeting Date:** December 10, 2020

In the breakout room discussions we addressed a number of questions.

### **What is some of the best advice that you received from your strongest mentor?**

- There is no problem you can't fix
- People come to us because they need a problem solved. We're problem solvers
- Your reputation is important. It's better to be known as honest, as a hard worker, and as someone that people want to work with
- Know the value of asking questions
- Guiding someone to develop a solution rather than solving everyone's problems will better serve you both
- "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth" - if someone is trying to help you, accept the help
- Develop a one-liner salient point that establishes who you are upon entering a room (Chris Voss, Never Split the Difference)

### **What are some of the challenges that you see facing the rising generation of female A/E/C leaders?**

- Tough industry for all. Learn as much as you can about as much as you can
- Reach outside your comfort zone to avoid being pigeonholed
- Changes happening faster during these years in our industry. Be adaptable and will to embrace change
- Social distancing mean losing so much face to face time. Use technology to stay in touch and check in
- Establishing yourself as a leader on the technical side. Try the business side as an alternative approach
- Communicating effectively as your counterparts even though you may have a soft voice and feel that if you joke around, that voice may not be taken seriously



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## Networking

### **What are some skills you have worked on with a mentee?**

- Growing out not just growing up
- There is more than one way to accomplish a goal
- For the mentor, ease off the micromanaging and allow your mentee to meet the challenge
- One of the keys to an effective mentor relationship is engagement and ownership from the mentee—it can be helpful if they drive the contact and meetings rather than falling to the mentor or a pre-determined schedule. Both the mentor and mentee should have roles and responsibilities in the relationship
- Help with communication skills (i.e. frequency and mode of communication, when to call, when to email)
- Have mentee shadow you in presentations
- Provide encouragement early on for growth and pay more attention to the advice given

### **What is the advice that you wish you had received when you were starting your leadership journey?**

- There are benefits to having both male and female mentors
- Stay in the “Picture”
- Make your professional goals known
- Be strategic in how you ask - don’t want to appear entitled or whiny
- Have a good support structure at home with people who will help you achieve growth in your career vs hold you back



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## Idea Sharing

- Mentoring programs help retain diverse/female employees. They can help encourage these employees and show them a path forward. Another strategy that firms have found helping to retain female employees is allowing flexibility—in scheduling, work-from-home options, and growth paths.
- Providing employees with growth opportunities is key to retaining them—those opportunities are not always vertical, but can be about finding ways for an employee to grow their skillset, take on a new challenge, or find a project that is particularly meaningful to them.
- Created a community for parents to share ideas. Gives the parents a chance to ask for things that they need with the challenge of working from home during COVID. Leaning In program.
- Mentoring does not need to be a formal program – look inside your company both vertically and horizontally, but also outside your company both within and outside the industry.
- Learn as much as you can, take risks, ask the hard questions.

## Lookout for your invitation to the next Event!

*Women Mentoring Women Leaders - Session 2*

*April 15, 2021 @ 2:00PM EST*

### **Keynote Speakers:**

- *Tammy Flanagan, CFO, Kimley-Horn*
- *Margaret Rauber, COO, Winter Construction*

If you have any questions or would like to submit suggestions, please email [kristen.walker@greyling.com](mailto:kristen.walker@greyling.com) or [suzannah.gill@epicbrokers.com](mailto:suzannah.gill@epicbrokers.com).