

GIVE YOUR CONSTRUCTION COMPANY AN EDGE

Adding women to your workforce may be the answer your company needs to achieve greater success.

BY LAULINE MITCHELL & LISA ROSE

Women can definitely give your construction company an edge! Experience has demonstrated that women have vital skill sets beyond just understanding the building process.

It's a lesson learned long ago by San Francisco-based Dome Construction, an industry leader in attracting and promoting women – from its CFO/treasurer to directors, project managers, professional engineers and estimators. Dome's inclusiveness helps build bonds with its increasing number of women clients, as well as prospective employees. In fact, Dome employs a significant number of women throughout its ranks, with 45 percent of its office and field management team comprised of women – compared to an industry average of 9.6 percent.

The company's environment supports women from entry-level employees to senior managers. Dome's balanced workplace is attractive to its employees and new recruits. Unlike a traditional male-dominated construction firm, Dome is more inclusive and representative of the new demographic balance transforming the 21st-century workplace. In our own careers, we have noticed a shift in attitudes toward women in the industry. Women are climbing higher and faster through the ranks, and there are more successful woman-owned and -operated businesses. Women are filling non-traditional roles, working in the field as well as in office-based jobs.

DIVERSITY APPEALS TO CLIENTS

Lauline Mitchell, Dome project manager, says, "In our roles as project manager and mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) specialist, we are involved in diverse teams that are made up of both men and women."

Lisa Rose, mechanical, electrical and plumbing specialist for Dome, says, "We have found that these balanced teams appeal to our clients. They appreciate a project team that includes women because it reflects a more accurate portrayal of our society."

The diversity of opinions, experiences and attitudes that women bring to the table enhances our projects. It adds another dimension that benefits the team as a whole. Everyone has different ways of attacking problems; diverse teams provide many unique approaches.

Project Engineer Bernadette Tuason notices more women in the industry, from the field to the office. She says, "In my last project, the team included four women and three men."

Dome estimating coordinator, Monica McGee, says "many of Dome's subcontractors are woman-owned businesses that respect Dome's inclusiveness."

