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Women in Construction: The State of the Industry in 2019

Date: February 14, 2019 by: Lior Zitzman

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When you think of any male-dominated industry, construction is probably the first job that comes to mind.

Of all the people who work in construction, women comprise only a small **9 percent** of the workforce. Even smaller is the number of female construction workers on the front lines of a job site—there is only one woman for every 100 employees on the field. Considering that women make up 47 percent of all employed individuals, this means that the

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These are several factors that explain this enormous gender gap, from unconscious gender bias to the lack of adequate training to overall perceptions of women working in construction, which is traditionally a male-dominated career. Despite these barriers, women continue to build their path in the industry. According to [Randstad](#), nearly one-third of companies promoted a woman to a senior position last year.

As construction is expected to grow by [3 percent](#) in 2019 and create almost 2 million new jobs by 2021, companies are looking to recruit more women to bring their skill sets into the field.

So, how are women rising up in construction in 2019? To answer this question, we compiled key statistics and examined the backgrounds of female leaders from around the construction industry. Check out the infographic below to learn more.

**From
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86.7%

are in office positions



13.3%

are tradespeople

Women are expected to make up **25% of the industry** by 2020

Jobs Held by Women

Nearly 1 in 3 companies **promoted women to senior roles** in 2018



45%

Sales & Office



31%

Management



21%

Construction & Maintenance



1.5%

Service Occupations



1.4%

Transportation

Female-Owned Firms

13% of constructions firms are owned by women



94% growth

in female owners from 2007 to 2018



9%

of female-owned firms achieve revenues of more than \$500,000

4% of new construction firms were launched by women last year

Female Leaders in Construction

Women are working **on the job site** and as **administrative leaders** in the construction industry

44%

of the top 100 contracting companies have women in **executive** roles.

16%

have females in **C-level positions**. 3 of them are **CEOs**.



Kim Roy

CEO,
HITT Contracting

Time in Position
14 months

Years in Construction
19 years



Ann Massey

CEO of Environment,
Wood PLC

Time in Position
16 months

Years in Construction
17 years



Kylie Rampa

CEO Australia,
Lendlease

Time in Position
32 months

Years in Construction
5 years

Time as Leaders

While women have led the board for many years, there is a growing number of **female managers on the field**.

Construction Managers



5.4 YEARS
average time in role



38% have held their role
for less than a year.

C-Level Executives



7 YEARS
average time in role



53% have held their role
for less than a year.

Female leaders have been in the industry an average of **15 years**

Obstacles Women Face



PAY GAP

43% of organizations
do not actively monitor
gender pay gaps.



ADVANCEMENT

73% of women feel passed
over for roles because of
their gender.



INJURY

Women have a **higher risk**
of workplace injury due to
poorly-fitted equipment.



Equipment Rental

Locations

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the workplace are female.

social events.

female manager.

Inspiration from Women in Construction



To be productive, people have to feel included.

Katie Coulson

Vice President, Skanska

An account manager for large projects and mentor to both women and men in diverse teams.



People tend to respect older male counterparts. I overcame that hurdle because I was patient and showed them I was chosen for this role for a reason.

Jennifer Vides

Superintendent, Turner Construction

A young professional who became a project superintendent at only 26 years old.



If you can show them how great a woman can be, then they start thinking many women can be great.



Anna Jacobson

Senior Preconstruction Manager, Morley Builders

A 18-year field veteran, breast cancer survivor, and founder of a women's peer mentorship group for construction.

Sources available at:

<https://www.bigrentz.com/blog/women-construction>



Our study shows that although women are still underrepresented, they are making significant progress in becoming leaders. A substantial portion of female executives and construction managers have been in their roles in the last 5 years, suggesting that companies are more recently



efforts to promote women in their organizations and educate young women about the benefits of working in the industry.

Growing Resources for Women in Construction

To enter the male-dominated field of construction, women can seek the increasing number of resources available to them that addresses their specific needs in the industry:

Women-Focused Groups

Nationally recognized groups like the National Association of Women in Construction ([NAWIC](#)) and Women in Operations provide mentorship, marketing and networking opportunities to help women who are new to the industry. Other notable groups include the [Women Construction Owners & Executives USA](#) and [Women in Operations](#).

A success of NAWIC comes from Jenny Brongo of Brongo Contracting and Supply, who learned from the organization how to successfully run the business after the passing of her father.

Construction Courses

In certain areas of the country, [large construction companies](#) collaborate with the local community to



ities also offer apprenticeship programs that strive to recruit women, prepare them for exams, and train their bodies for work.

Conferences and Blogs

A number of conferences are held to celebrate and discuss the topic of women in construction. NAWIC's [Annual Conference](#) includes professionals seminars and workshops for women, while the [Groundbreaking Women in Construction](#) conference provides management training and teaches women how to bridge pay gaps in their workplace.

In addition to conferences, women can stay up to date in the industry with blogs like [Constructing Equality](#) and [Tradeswomen](#), which aim to tackle issues of diversity, provide original research, highlight scholarship opportunities, and share personal stories and anecdotes.

How Companies Can Recruit More Women

There is still much work to be done to fully include women in construction. To increase recruitment and improve retention, companies need to acknowledge and remove gender bias from their work culture, develop training programs and local mentorship groups specific to the needs of women, include more



Schools and educational programs need to highlight the value of construction jobs for women and young girls so that they can see the industry as a viable career path.

Although there are obstacles for women to get into construction, women have the potential to solve the industry's labor shortage. With more and more groundbreaking women chipping away at gendered norms and leveling the playing field, the industry is taking bigger steps at becoming a more diverse and inclusive space for future generations.

Sources:

[ENR](#) | [GenieBelt](#) | [NAWIC](#) | [Keep Craft Alive](#) | [Commercial Observer](#) | [Autodesk](#) | [BLS](#) | [CPWR](#) | [Constructive Dive](#) | [American Express](#) | [Randstad](#) | [The Balance](#) | [Jobsite](#) | [Colorado Homebuilding Academy](#) | [Womenable](#)

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