

Concrete results for this project manager

What is the name of the company you work for?

EE Austin & Son, Inc.

What does your company do?

EE Austin & Son is a General Construction Contractor and Construction Manager where we manage and build large scale commercial projects including Hospitals, Schools and Universities, Office Buildings, and Entertainment Facilities along with Industrial projects such as Water Treatment and Manufacturing. We also operate a Concrete Plant that services northwest Pennsylvania.

What is the size of this company?

Our organization includes 20 office staff, 15 Concrete Drivers, and in busy months will reach over 100 Field Crew consisting of Carpenters, Laborers, Cement Finishers, and Superintendents.

How long have you been with this company?

I have been with the Company 24 years with an additional 2 during college.

What is your job title?

Vice President and Project Manager

Describe you day to day job/work related tasks and activities.

Basically, I am involved in the complete experience of bringing a construction project from concept to actual completion. As owners want to build a project, we will team up with them and help the process along working with architects and engineers who design the facility. As plans are created, we prepare cost estimates and time schedules, obtain subcontractors to perform specialty work, and then move into construction phase. We then manage that process sequencing the workflow, coordinating materials and manpower, and integrating local requirements such as permitting and utilities. Finally, as a project is turned over for the Owner's use we then transition to operational tasks and making sure the project is performing the way it should.

What are the dynamics of gender roles in your industry?

While this industry has historically been filled with men the various roles I am seeing more and more women working in the Construction Field. There are many in architect and engineering positions and there are many in similar situations as mine. Also, I see more moving into the field trades than what there once was. Really there are many opportunities for everyone if they are interested in construction.

What are the best things about your career?

There is something new every day. While the functions of estimating costs, managing subcontractors, and coordinating materials are the same the actual tasks are different. On any given day I may be involved with a High School Renovation, an Office Upgrade, and a new Factory. All of these types of projects have vastly different needs and therefore require different approaches. In addition, I need to be a creative problem solver to address each of these specific conditions that arise. So, it is always a new day.

What are the challenges faced in your career?

We face challenges of many types. These include very tight project schedule deadlines are requirements. We sometimes run up against shortages of material or qualified craft workers. We also work in all types of weather so that efficiency is effective. Also, as much as we all work together to achieve success on a project there are times where conflict arises that needs to be resolved.

What is your educational background?

I have a BS in Construction Management and a BS in Architectural Engineering both from the University of Cincinnati.

Is this the career you chose initially, or have there been changes in your career choices?

I originally started out wanting to be an architect but as I took a couple of years in

that program, I realized that I wanted more of the "doing" versus the "designing" of a construction project. With the combination of degrees that I have I get the best of both worlds design and doing.

What let to those changes?

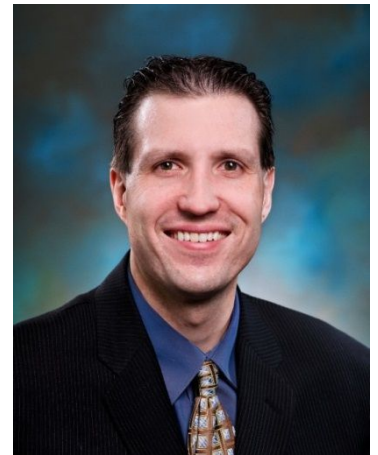
During school I was able to transfer from the pure Architecture program into the Applied Sciences where Construction Management was offered. There I was able to achieve the dual degrees.

What has led you to your current career?

I always was drawn to achieving something or results, a proof that I had been there. Construction allows for that in that I can say years from now "I was involved in that project" or "I helped build that". It was even early when I was in college working for home builders that you could be part of a result that improved and excited someone. Whether that was a new house or a new school we accomplished something.

What qualities are important for you to hold the position you have?

The basic skills include activities such as blueprint reading, math, geometry, and science. This first layer then is added to a mindset of collaboration along with a healthy portion of perseverance. Also, communication in all forms, written, verbal, and group is important to keep your project team engaged and all working together. In addition, there needs to be a willingness to continue to learn new things and to allow others to contribute to the overall success of a project.



Stephen J. Morvay, Project Manager



How do you prepare for an interview for this position?

Preparing for an interview in this field or in any other is to start with enthusiasm that this is what you really want to do, couple that enthusiasm with developing the skills that were noted earlier and any type of experience within the industry and you have the potential to go a long way. You don't have to know everything about the job because specific skills can be taught. A mindset of willing to learn, willing to participate in anything that comes your way, and willing to stick to it will be recognized by any potential employer.

What would people be surprised to know about your career?

When I first started one of my early duties was to clean concrete formwork as well as paint the storage sheds. Cleaning forms, for reuse after concrete has been poured, is very dusty and while the forms became clean I did not.



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