



Safety & Mental Health

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION SUMMIT

TRACEY MITCHELL

*Hard Hats and Determination:
Women in Construction Breaking
down Stereotypes and Building
Futures.*

Introduction

Tracey Mitchell

Safety Lead – CBD North Precinct

Metro Tunnel Project, Melbourne



How Did I Get Here

MY STORY

What did I Learn?



- Women only make up 2% of workers in the Australian construction sector.
- To promote mental health and safety for women in the workplace, action needed to be taken.
- In August 2022, I established the first Women in Construction Group, aimed at blue collar female workers on site.
- Through community, a safe space was needed for women to work as a team. We can work together to combat the biggest issues facing our gender in the industry.

What the Women in Construction Group Entailed



- Sharing profiles of women in blue-collar construction roles, including:
 - Their journeys on how they got to where they are
 - Their experiences and achievements
 - Advice for women further their careers the industry
 - Tips for overcoming challenges
 - Guest Speakers including HR representatives
 - Monthly get-togethers to discuss concerns
 - Introduce new members and network
 - Workshop ideas
- Women's Health
 - Breast Cancer Awareness
 - How Anxiety can show up
 - (handouts provided)
- Monthly get-togethers to discuss concerns
- Introduce new members and network
- Workshop ideas
- Women's Health
 - E.g. Breast Cancer Awareness
 - How Anxiety can show up
 - (handouts provided)

The Problem Areas



The Main Areas our Group Focused on Improving:

- Growing confidence
- Flexible working arrangements
- Workplace Bullying
- Apprentices –Future Parental Leave
- Offering Training and Development Opportunities
- Providing a Safe Spaces for Women
 - Providing a voice

Building Confidence

Using our support systems to help everyone in the group

Use the different range of skills, ages and industry experience to help us help each other

Handouts

- The Art of developing confidence



Flexible Working

- Using word-of-mouth to inform about opportunities
- Offering flexibility and support
- Physical demands of the job with families
- Single mothers demands



Workplace Bullying



Tackling Common Issues

Workplace culture

Being proactive to keep bullying at bay

How there are various types of bullying can show up

Creating Safe Spaces for Women



- Lack of suitable facilities and equipment
 - Gendered toilets
- Not just physical spaces, but providing a safe space for mental health support
- Feeling safe to raise any issues or concerns without bias

Opportunities for Training & Upskilling



- Using word-of-mouth to inform about opportunities
- Offering flexibility and support

Main Takeaways

Creating a WIC Group Positive Impacts:

- Watching group members thrive
- Seeing how males on site are positively impacted
- Success of women in their roles
- Education and Engagement with all members on site



The Reason Why this Group was so Successful:

We had total support from the Projects Management

If we didn't have their support allowing the women to attend these meetings, it would have failed!



Empowering Women in Construction



- Lack of Role Models and Mentors
 - Mentorship Programs
 - Networking Events and Conferences
- Profiles of Successful Women in Construction
 - Their Career Paths and Experiences
- Challenges they've faced and overcome –
 - Advice for women entering the industry

Get Involved and Make a Difference

How do we continue to make change?

Let's work together to empower women in construction and build a more diverse and inclusive industry



Questions