

DIR Women in Construction
In-depth Interview Discussion Guide

[Segment: Employers and Mentors]

August 21st, 2025

PURPOSE:

To gain a deeper understanding of target audience; including their values, perceptions on women/nonbinary individuals in construction, their attitudes and needs. Interviews will help uncover cultural stigmas around women in construction and how culture plays a part in retention. The findings from this interview will inform future marketing strategies to better reach and engage target audiences.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

- **Overall:** 30 IDIs
- **Runtime:** 60 minutes

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Employers and Mentors (N=10-15)

DISCUSSION FLOW:

The discussion is meant to flow as a natural conversation that pivots naturally to reach the next topic. The goal is to cover each section, but it is up to the moderator to probe or skip certain questions.

INTRODUCTION [5 minutes]:

Hi there. Thanks so much for speaking with me today. Let me go ahead and introduce myself and tell you a little bit about what we'll be talking about today. My name is _____ and I work with Sensis, an independent research agency, that's been hired to learn about careers in construction.

My job is simply to listen, to encourage conversation, and to hear the opinions and perspectives this group has to offer. So, whether you love or hate something we talk about, it is all the same to me. I'm here to learn from you.

Our discussion will last about 60 minutes today. Everything we discuss is completely confidential, so we encourage you to be as open and honest as you would like. I also want to mention that we will be recording this session: that is just so we can look back at it in case there is something we cannot remember when we are preparing our report. We may use some of your quotes in our report, but we are not interested in who said

what, so anything you say will be completely anonymous, or not assigned to your name. Our report will mostly be a summary of what we talked about today, and it will only be seen by our client and the researchers who prepare it.

Any questions before we get started?

RESPONDENT INTRO [5 minutes]

Now I'd love to get to know you a little bit better. Can you introduce yourself? You can tell me your name, what city you live in, and what you do for a living.

(If needed:) How does your work overlap with women or nonbinary individuals who work in construction?

PATHWAY INTO CONSTRUCTION [10-15 minutes]

Let's talk about what getting into a career in construction, what can you tell me about the different pathways into construction?

How about pathways into construction for women? Would you say those differ in any way?

- (If they are a women/nonbinary in construction): What was your experience applying for your first job in construction?
- What could be improved about these entry points?

How do you think those entry points have changed over the years?

What were some challenges women and nonbinary individuals face during the application process? What barriers exist for women or nonbinary individuals to apply to jobs in construction?

What mentor and career guide opportunities exist as resources to support interested individuals? What do you think is missing?

WOMEN/NONBINARY IN CONSTRUCTION [15 minutes]

Typically speaking, women and nonbinary individuals are not as well represented in careers in construction, especially in certain trades. What have you heard about the challenges of pursuing a career in construction as a woman/nonbinary individual?

Do you think certain trades are more affected than others? If so, which ones?

What challenges or obstacles relating to careers in construction do you think are unique to women/nonbinary individuals?

What advice would you give to other women considering construction?

- (For those working in construction): Any advice you wish you would have had when you were just starting out?

CULTURE AND RETENTION [10 minutes]

What is the culture around women in construction? How about for nonbinary individuals? How has this evolved over time? What opportunities do you think exist for changing things?

- (For those working in construction): What have you learned from your own experience? How about from other colleagues?

Do you think the current culture promotes retention?

- Why yes or why not?
 - If not: What do you think needs to change to help promote retention?

What are the barriers to increasing retention?

What do you think could be done to improve retention for women and nonbinary individuals working in construction?

MENTORSHIP [5 minutes]

What has your experience been with the mentorship programs that exist?

- What has been the impact of mentorship programs that you have been a part of?
- What do you think is the most important aspect of these programs
- Where do you think there are areas of growth for those programs?
- What are the challenges of those programs?

Looking to the future, how do you see these programs evolving to better support apprentices?