

DIR Women in Construction

In-depth Interview Discussion Guide

[Segment: Women & Nonbinary individuals in construction]

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 IDs
- **Runtime:** 60 minutes

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Women & Nonbinary individuals in construction (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.

Great. What trade you're in and for how long have you been doing that?

PATHWAY INTO CONSTRUCTION [10 minutes]

Let's talk about what got you into construction, what sparked your interest in a career in construction? Tell me about the development of that interest. Where did it start and what did you do to follow it?

How did you hear about careers in construction? We can speak generally and then what did you hear that really strengthened your interest?

What kinds of difficulties or barriers did you feel you had to overcome to pursue that career?

(If needed, can add: Any training requirements, financial, cultural, or informational barriers?)

RECRUITMENT & HIRING EXPERIENCE [10-15 minutes]

What was your experience applying for your first job in construction?

Have you ever felt discouraged from applying to certain roles?

What were some challenges you faced during the application process that might be barriers for other women or nonbinary folks to apply?

Did you have any mentors or career guides to help you throughout this process?

- If so, how was that helpful?

A big goal for this research is to understand how people can better recruit more women and nonbinary individuals to careers in construction. What opportunities exist to recruit more women and nonbinary individuals into construction?

Have you ever seen a campaign to recruit women toward careers in construction? If so, what was the campaign like? Do you remember where you saw it? What did you think about it? Do you think it was successful in getting more women or nonbinary individuals into construction?

What message do you think needs to be out there to get more women interested in construction careers?

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. How has it been to pursue a career in construction as a woman/nonbinary individual?

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

How would you summarize the experience of being a woman/nonbinary individual in construction?

Have you encountered obstacles or challenges that you think are unique to women/nonbinary individuals?

Have you ever thought about leaving or changing careers because of challenges associated with working in construction?

What advice would you give to other women considering 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?

- 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?

Are there systemic barriers that impact retention? (If needed): This could include things like childcare, flexible work options, limited opportunities for women/nonbinary individuals, or accommodations that might impact 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 such as yourself?