

Empowering Women

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The mission of the Empowering Women Mentorship Program is to foster the development and support of up-and-coming women in our industry by providing a platform for them to leverage the power of mentoring.

Both KJ and Stacey have several tremendous mentors through our careers, mentors that challenged, encouraged and helped us become the individuals and leaders we are today. In most cases, we just lucked into it. If we had known then what we know now, we would have been more intentional about finding and building mentoring relationships.

That has led us here – partnering to create and offer the Empowering Women Mentorship Program for a limited number of women in our electrical industry.

What makes this program special and what sets it apart?

- We are focused on up and coming women in the electrical industry – allowing us to tailor the program on specific needs and topics relevant to our mentees.
- Our mentors are senior leaders and experienced veterans from the industry.
- There are opportunities throughout the program to meet and connect with other professionals in the industry – broadening your network.
- The program is structured but with flexibility to make it your own.

Our Sponsorship approach: We reached out to a very small group of industry leaders and invited them to nominate/sponsor an up and coming woman in our industry, someone they see potential in and are willing to invest in to take her career to the next level.

Being a mentee, particularly in this program, requires a commitment of time and energy. The sponsor vouches for her that she has the aspiration, drive and commitment for the program as well as pays her registration fee.

Upon being sponsored, each mentee completed an application, self-assessment and confirmed she is willing to dedicate the time and effort to see this program through.

Our Mentors: Many of our sponsors also volunteered to serve as mentors. Mentors were asked to complete a profile and self-assessment to help us identify their strengths. This helped us in matching mentoring pairs based on the skills of the mentor with the development needs of the mentee.

Our goal was to ensure we could make the best matches and to ensure everyone gets the most out of the experience. To enhance the likelihood of successful matches, our pool of mentors needed to be at least 50% larger than our number of mentees.

We were excited to secure a commitment from more than enough mentors with diverse backgrounds in distribution, manufacturing, electrical contracting and manufacturer rep



Empowering Women

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

businesses. The men and women in our pool of mentors have combined more than 500 years of experience in the industry.

The inaugural class: We had a tremendous response to our call for sponsors and finalized the program with 20 mentees. Women with varying backgrounds in sales, marketing, operations, IT, human resources and more. Their level of experience ranges from just starting in the industry to 20+ years' experience. Similar to our mentors, our mentees represent a number of different companies in manufacturing, distribution, electrical contracting and manufacturers rep businesses.

The timeline:

- We announced the program in early June 2020 with a deadline for applications on July 10, 2020.
- Once the class was finalized, then the real fun began in matching mentees with their mentor. This consisted of a deep dive into mentee areas of focus matched with mentor's areas of expertise.
- On July 23 we conducted a webinar for our mentors on "How to be a great mentor" and to give them an opportunity to meet each other.
- We conducted our official kick-off on August 6 with an overview to level set on program expectations, mentoring best practices and, using zoom breakouts, the mentoring pairs got to meet 1-on-1 "live" with their mentoring partner.
- Between August 6 and November 12, the mentoring pairs will meet at least 6 times in a combination of phone, video and (in some cases) socially distanced in person.
- November 12 is our celebration wrap-up, again via zoom.
- Then we will collect feedback, modify the program with enhancements and roll out phase 2.

A unique twist: The initial plan was to kick-off this program with an in-person event, tying in with an industry event. But with the pandemic that obviously was not possible. Utilizing zoom for the kickoff ended up being a great back up plan and will likely be used for future launches as well. We were able to utilize break out rooms for our pairs to be able to interact and 'meet face to face'. We were excited and are grateful that everyone was responsive and embraced the use of technology – allowing us to kick off a program during a pandemic that will encourage and support the development of our up-and-coming talented women in our industry through the power of mentoring both during the pandemic and beyond!

For more information, please feel free to reach out!

KJ Van 847-833-8124 info@KJCompany.net

Stacey Felzer 404-822-4870 stacey@chordmarketingservice.com



EMPOWERING WOMEN MENTORSHIP PROGRAM
BROUGHT TO YOU BY KJ COMPANY AND CHORD MARKETING SERVICES.

