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2019 Women Who Build: Colleen Lenz, Ankura

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Name: Colleen Lenz

Position: Director

Company: Ankura

How many years have you been in your current field? 6

Who are three women – living or dead – that you would like to have drinks with and why?

1. Oprah Winfrey – She’s an inspirational businesswoman who I have no doubt could provide invaluable insights and advice.
2. Ellen DeGeneres –Not only is she a talented comedian who I’m sure would have great stories to tell over drinks, she is also an inspiring philanthropist and businesswoman as well.
3. Emma Watson – As a young female activist for women’s rights, Emma is the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador. I think she’s immensely well-spoken about so many important issues facing women.

What were your biggest fears when you started out in your profession? Entering the construction industry, it was certainly a fear that I would face challenges being female in a male dominated industry. Luckily, I have had the opportunity to work with many inspiring women in the industry who have been wonderful mentors.

Which project, deal or transaction was the “game changer” in the advancement of your career during the last 10 years? The game changing project for me was the first construction litigation case I had the opportunity to work on from start to finish. Although this occurred early in my career, it was my first chance to see every facet of the litigation process. From the initial document gathering and review, to the complex analysis process, to the creation of an expert report and through expert depositions. I learned so much from this single project, helping me grow immensely as a consultant early in my career.

What are you doing differently in 2019 that has had a positive impact on your career?

At the end of each day I've been writing down three "wins of the day". Taking time to reflect on what went well has been a helpful tool to destress and recognize daily accomplishments that might otherwise be forgotten.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it? I have been part of Ankura's construction group since graduating (although previously part of Navigant Consulting prior to Ankura's acquisition of the construction group in August 2018). I continue to learn and grow thanks to the incredible team of consultants I work with. Most importantly, I've learned the importance of being a reliable team member. To me that means performing outstanding quality control, always maintaining a positive attitude, and being prepared to go above and beyond what is expected.

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