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## **2022 Women in Commercial Real Estate: Courtney Hudgins, DPS Group**

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Courtney Hudgins  
Process Engineer II

What advice would you offer to women getting into the CRE industry?

This is probably a common answer, but my advice is to take the initiative to ask questions, and to be an active listener. The collective knowledge that has been shared with me from my colleagues in the industry has been invaluable. I am glad to work in an environment where curiosity, collaboration, and open communication are highly encouraged, and our subject matter experts jump at the opportunity to help all team members to learn and grow. My second piece of advice would be to share your ideas even though it can feel daunting. Your perspective may be just what is needed!

What has been your biggest challenge and how have you faced it?

Transitioning from chemical manufacturing to biotech was a challenge. I am lucky to have found a fantastic mentor at DPS who dedicated time to me every week to go over general topics in the industry, answer all my questions, and who was and is still genuinely invested in my professional development. I also found that getting involved in projects and learning by doing worked well. These two strategies combined were effective in me coming up to speed quickly and becoming a valued team member.

Who is a woman leader you find to be inspiring and why?

Sara Blakely, an American businesswoman and philanthropist, is a leader I find inspiring. She had innovative ideas and a fresh perspective to contribute to the industry, but her research and development was dismissed citing lack of formal experience. Several weeks after her initial pitch she received a call from a mill operator who, at the encouragement of his daughters, offered to support Blakely's concept. Her fresh perspective helped shape an industry: In 2000 her line went into production and in 2012 she was named the world's youngest, self-made female billionaire by Forbes Magazine and one of TIME's 100 Most Influential People.