



# Sara Fisher

## Smashing Stereotypes

**Sara Fisher** is a Business Development Manager in the Construction area of the Parking Industry and take's us through her first few years and what she has seen.

Sara admits that because she 'fell into' the construction sector, she hadn't given a second thought to the lack of women represented. She was genuinely surprised by how few (if any) women she encountered during the working week.

Construction is a varied, fast-paced, and challenging sector, so why then were most roles not attracting female applicants?

There have been a few low points for Sara in the past – however, male colleagues, peers and clients now treat her as an equal. “At Ballast Nedam Parking, there is a feeling of being part of the team and I am judged for my ability alone - colleagues don't even consider my gender. Yes, construction is still a male-dominated environment but truthfully, I really like a bit of good-humoured banter with the chaps. I used to wear pink laces in my safety boots deliberately to break the ice and poke fun at myself”, she laughs.

Her first role was working in a very macho environment and not so enjoyable. She was incredibly successful, but felt that she had only been employed, in part, to tick an equality box. There was absolutely nothing equal about that role In fact, Sara felt very isolated by the all-male team. She discovered after leaving that the less successful male counterpart had earned a far higher salary.

Her thought process was simply – “I like the challenging sector, it's the right career path, but the wrong employer”. So... she quit! “If you take anything away from my story its's that you can never change a toxic work culture – ever”. “My last roles have been completely different. There are mostly genuinely brilliant employers out there and a real focus now to encourage more women into construction and offer flexible working. I still chuckle to myself at the odd raised eyebrow on-site or in meetings when I am first introduced though – but such instances are few and far between nowadays”.

Sara's advice to the women out there feeling the same way.

"Consider a career in construction! Every other woman who works in this sector really enjoys it. There needs to be better careers advice/guidance/mentoring to understand the wide range of opportunities available in this sector from an earlier age because perhaps I would have found what I enjoy doing sooner."

