

THE CONSTRUCTREACH E-LEARNING MODULES:

Giving Young Construction Professionals the Skills to Succeed

More Than Just Safety

On the job site, safety is paramount. Mike Kalinowski, Director of Safety at W.E. O'Neil Construction, works every day to ensure his crews follow OSHA regulations and insurance requirements. When he was introduced to a safety engineering student who would be interning with the company, Mike expected to do what he had always done, which is show Kevin the field, walk job sites and look for safety hazards, and teach him how to help others stay safe.

However, this internship experience would prove to be more than learning the basics of safety engineering. Kevin was part of ConstructReach's internship program, which includes various e-learning modules that help both intern and supervisor work together to maximize success. Although Mike was familiar with ConstructReach and its mission to engage younger generations in the construction field, he didn't realize just how integral it would be to the internship experience.

Importance of Soft Skills

Success in the construction industry requires more than studying the ins and outs of your specialty. It also requires soft skills like teamwork, leadership, communication, and time management. The ConstructReach e-learning modules help interns learn these crucial skills while they're receiving field experience, helping them to take full advantage of their internships.

Mike saw how the modules were keeping both him and Kevin accountable. "I was able to look at his progress and use the modules as a tool to make sure he got what he needed 'in the real world,'" says Mike. Of all the skills highlighted in the program's framework, Mike found the time management lessons were most valuable to his intern, and over the course of several months, he saw huge improvements in Kevin's ability to manage his time and schedule tasks.

Also important to Kevin's specialty: presentations. "We do a lot of training presentations in and outside the field. It's important for that messaging to come across succinctly and clearly," says Mike. Kevin used the public speaking skills learned through the ConstructReach program to present to other safety professionals about the dangers of crystalline silica – a topic he personally chose to display his knowledge and newfound expertise.

Preparing For the Future

To other managers interested in helping their interns find success, Mike advises: "This program is a vital tool that can fast-track your intern into a position at your company or somewhere else in the industry. The overall end goal for all of us should be to promote better education and nurture stronger professionals."

Kevin, with his internship now finished, has one year left in school. Mike stays in touch with Kevin to hear about how he's putting what he learned to use and advancing his career. In the end, both Mike and Kevin took away important lessons from their experiences with the ConstructReach internship program – showing how ConstructReach can help everyone at all stages of their career.



MIKE KALINOWSKI
Director of Safety

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"There's so much more to the job – hard skills and soft skills."