

Anita Hartman

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How did you get your start in the plumbing & heating industry?

I was 18, just out of high school and had big plans of taking the summer off, my parents had other ideas, so I made the deal that I would apply to 5 and if I didn't get any, then I could enjoy the summer and start college in the fall. I got all 5 and took the admin roll at Ideal Plumbing. The rest as they would say is history.

What is your current job and what do you love about it?

I am a Profit Center Manager for Emco Corporation in West Kelowna BC. I love making a difference in the lives of our customers and my teammates.

What is the best career advice you ever received?

Utilize your team and be yourself. OH, and there's no crying in plumbing. This was told to me 25 years ago by one of my mentors, I said "Wanna bet", that's another story not for this time. And yes, he is still a trusted advisor.

If you could go back in time and give your younger self career advice, what would it be?

Work life balance is crucial, driving till your bucket is empty benefits no one. It is possible to be a no matter what girl and still have personal balance and boundaries. I've made so many changes in the last 5 years and never missed a beat.

What are you looking forward to professionally/where do you see yourself going?

I look forward to getting my business and my team through their 1st recession. There are so many learnings this type of market can teach. I have 7-10 years left and I am looking forward to having a strong team to take over for me when I move on to my next adventures. Almost time to retire, Maybe.....

What energizes you outside of work?

The time I spend with my Grandson and my adult kids.
Living in the Okanagan is amazing, therefore anything outdoors, walking, hiking, swimming, golfing, and making time to travel with friends.

What is the biggest obstacle you've had to overcome?

Working for Emco, I was never held back because I was a woman, I was 19 when I first came to the order desk. the struggle was with some clients, they still call my boss on me if they don't like my answer, and to this day I have always been supported. Although I haven't experienced too much of this, I find fellow women in the industry spend a little too much time snipping at each other, I would love to see this change...we need to support each other.

What is your "superpower"/what are you really good at?

Building relationships. I run my business, my team and client base from my soul.

How do you challenge & inspire yourself to grow?

I am grateful that the older I have gotten I am really in tune to when something isn't right or if I need something personally or professionally. I will seek advice and take multiple types of actions when I feel anything less than optimal. When my passion for the minute and the day lags I go digging for answers. This has always been a priority for me. It can be as simple as a hike, meditation, weekend turned off or a chat with a member of my network. Teaching my team to have a self care plan as well as an education plan is really important. Its our job to stay relevant and fueled to ourselves and our Profit Center.

How would you/what would you say to attract other women to join our industry?

Go for it! Anything you put your mind to you can do. This industry is so fun and fulfilling with endless opportunities, not to mention the amazing people. Be open to the possibilities and don't stereotype, sometimes we can be our own worst enemies. Surround yourself with great people and nurture your network.