



This Week's Featured Sponsor Shout Out

Interview with Joe Hofstetter, PE, CEM, LEED AP



In your career, what is the biggest change/challenge you are seeing?

When I first started working at Austin, I had only worked as a design architect, so I was nervous about working on the construction side.

However, now this is my favorite part of my job. It is so rewarding to be a part of the team from the beginning of a project. We turn the client's goals and objectives into a virtual building and design environment, all the way through the finished building that fully functions to deliver products.

Of your recent projects, which is your favorite and why?

By using the lean design and construction practices, including pull planning, Austin designed and built a process plant for Virginia Poultry Growers Cooperative (VPGC). I loved the impact that my work could have on a community. It allowed people to have safe, sanitary jobs that feed millions yearly. We designed a beautiful building, and we worked with local subcontractors and skilled trade professionals (helping local businesses), which was important for us and the client.



Virginia Poultry Growers



Virginia Poultry Growers



Swift Foods

What advice would you give to a recent architecture graduate?

Architecture is not only about designing beautiful buildings; architecture is about designing a space that allows our clients to achieve their goals. The space needs to properly function and be built within budget and on schedule - but SAFETY should always be your biggest priority. The architectural details are important. For example, in food plants, you must understand how bacteria and pathogens can grow and make sure the buildings you are designing keep the people who will be using them safe, and the final product sanitary.

Looking back at your career, what are you most proud of accomplishing?

Before coming to the United States, my peers in Romania told me not to come here because I would end up doing unskilled positions and I would not be able to reach my goals. I am proud of myself for learning English, overcoming all the challenges that came with this substantial change, and working in my dream career for almost 20 years.

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