

KATALIN CSIKASZ: BORN TO BE AN ENGINEER

In a career that spans some 21 years, Katalin Csikasz hasn't asked for any special favours. She's never been worried about being a woman in a male dominated industry. Engineering is all she knows, a career she loves and Katalin lets her knowledge do the talking. Chat with her and it's easy to see why gender plays no issue in her role as an engineer: respect thoroughly earned through ability.

It's an absolute fair comment to say that the New Zealand engineering industry needs more people like Katalin Csikasz.

Qualifications galore, she adds value to the sector through her knowledge, experience and an absolute dedication to a career she was born into. Her father is a mechanical engineer and she knew what she wanted to do in life from an early age, much preferring to dismantle and reassemble her sewing machine than put any stitches on material.

Immigrating to New Zealand in 2001 from Slovakia, Katalin brought a wealth of experience with her and a Masters degree in engineering.

"I was always technically minded," says the civil structural engineer, now running her own company TechPro Plus.

"It's not common these days that people study something and then end up in that field too. I'm very fortunate," she says.

"I lectured for four years," and it gave her a chance to pass on her knowledge and more importantly her passion for engineering. "A really big percentage of students I lectured ended up studying structural engineering, and it was a thrill to see that. When you can ignite passion in people because you love it too and they can feel that, it really is a great feeling."

Structural design consultancy was not her thing she quickly found out, identifying that she wasn't the kind of structural engineer that sits in front of a computer and cranks numbers.

"I like the interaction with people," she tells

Engineering News, gaining a position as a field engineer for Hilti International, a massive European company. "This is when I discovered that this is me."

On moving to New Zealand she held roles with James Hardie and Fletchers as part of CSP Pacific, an engineering manager for a steel manufacturing plant.

Katalin is a problem solver. And this is where she feels women do have an advantage within the engineering industry, having made it a priority to get rid of the "gap between engineering and manufacturing," that she could see was apparent.

"Women tend to be far more perceptive than men, with their emotional quotient being of great benefit to engineering firms. There's research to back that women are more perceptive and intuitive," she says.

In her varied roles she's implemented training programmes and has developed a love for working with manufacturers to improve quality and performance, product compliance, product safety, product/process design and risk management.

TechPro Plus was born from such experience and passion.

Today, she is focussed on building strong relationships and takes a collaborative approach to offer unique yet practical solutions to a range of challenges to ensure successful delivery of projects to meet client requirements.



Katalin often has people comment on how courageous she is, being a woman in the engineering industry but she has never seen it that way.

Aside from the well documented gap in salaries, the only real pressures she has felt are those that she has placed on herself and often that has meant she's had to be fairly "hard-nosed".

"I've always felt that I have to deliver more... I have to know more, I have to work harder," she says, which isn't a bad thing as it's "got me to where I am today".

Katalin's a problem solver, and in engineering and construction you want more of those types of people.

"All I've ever wanted, like everyone, male or female, is to be fairly recognised for what I offer and what I can do," says Katalin.

In the end, that's all anyone wants isn't it?



NEW ZEALAND Engineering News



www.totaloilsolutions.co.nz
0800 TOTAL OIL (868 256)

CORE Automation | Design | Power Systems | Machinery | Materials | Environment | Workshop | 3D Printing

JULY 2016

Vol 47 No.06 | \$9.00

www.engineeringnews.co.nz



40

**TITANIUM
3D PRINTED
BIRD BEAK**

**WIRED FOR
SUCCESS**

30

**HI-TECH MACHINING
TAKES FLIGHT**

18