

Career Opportunities

Women: Breaking Barriers In Today's Engineering Work Force

(NAPSA)—What do colorful cell phones and the latest handheld personal organizers have in common? Each were designed by women engineers.

Their efforts helped ensure that cell phones could be found more easily in a woman's handbag and that people could keep track of more than one schedule on their electronic organizer.

Advances in these and other products are originating in the female mind more often these days. "Whether these contributions changed the world is irrelevant," says Denise DeMoss of Kelly Engineering Resources, a business unit of Kelly Services. "The point is that for the companies that introduced them and for the people who use them, they make a difference."

It's a potential difference that many businesses are missing because the profession is dominated by men.

Currently, only one out of 10 engineers is a woman. "Among the reasons women are under-represented in the engineering workforce is the lack of public awareness about the profession and the unappealing curriculum of math and science courses that serve as the building blocks in the field," says DeMoss.

"Incorporating more exciting, relevant learning experiences earlier in school would do wonders for retention of the best students, and encourage even more females to enter the engineering field."

Kelly Engineering Resources suggests the following effective approaches for women currently in, or considering entering the engineering field:

- Look for a woman-friendly firm. Some companies have devel-



oped a well-earned reputation for being inclusive.

- Use a recruiter. A good recruiter can look for and identify women-friendly companies and match individual skills with the corporate culture.

- Network. Women should learn to leverage their personal ties, not only does it lend support and nurturing, it is an informal recruiting ground for new opportunities.

- Refine interviewing skills.

- Develop professional skills. There are numerous technical and professional societies where women can find support and continue their development.

- Communicate effectively. Knowing what you're talking about is only part of the solution. Be assertive without being harsh.

- Be confident. With the lack of support in the business world, you must be self-assured and prove that you're capable. That drive has to come from within.

- Be humble. Admit when you don't know something. In return, people will take more time to explain things which gives you a better understanding and allows you to do your job better.

For more information about Kelly Engineering Resources, visit www.kellyengineering.com.