

Surety industry success correlates with family experiences

STAFF WRITER – The Ontario Construction Report Special Feature

Like many people Chris Kucman came to the surety industry without intending it, in his case not long out of university. Today he is vice president, surety with Trisura and cannot imagine being anywhere else.

After university Kucman worked in commercial banking for a few years before an offer to take a position in a “credit role in a construction environment” came to him through a local head hunter in 2002.

“I kind of grew up around construction. My father (and mother) owned a car repair shop and he is quite talented when it comes to virtually anything hands on. That to a smaller degree rubbed off on me and I’ve always had a passion for construction,” he said.

Offered the surety position he says he “was intrigued by the idea of getting to wear different hats, whether they be construction, legal, accounting, marketing... and to learn about various construction businesses, so I had to give it a try.”

As a young man working with seasoned construction professionals and industry experts, Kucman learned early on to ask many questions, listen and learn. He says over-confidence, especially in someone younger can be a detriment.

“The biggest challenge early on was developing a base of knowledge which is something that only comes with time.”

In his case he says having a basic understanding of construction terminology and language helped, as did the advice of those around him. He says he recognized the talent in the people around him and always tried to adopt the information and advice they shared. That advice and knowledge from his mentors and peers over time, he says, helped build his career.

Kucman joined Trisura in 2006 and helped build the company from the ground up, learning about different aspects of business and the industry along the way. Today he is responsible for both Ontario and Atlantic Canada.

While Kucman’s own career has certainly been a success, his greatest satisfaction comes in the success of others. “I love seeing our team growing and reaching their own professional and person goals. When you are able to provide the people around you with support and direction and see the results come to fruition, it is truly satisfying,” he said.

The same can be said when meeting with brokers and their clients. “It is a tremendous feeling when you know you have helped someone or some company at the end of the day.”

Saying there is a lot of great talent in the industry in people of varying ages, he says it is clear that success comes



Chris Kucman

down to hard work, not age. “It is definitely an industry worth considering. I would tell young people to seriously consider it as an option, to expect to work hard, try to learn and absorb all they can and success will follow.”

He says surety may not be an industry many people initially consider but looking around he sees people who come and stay. It is rare in his experience he says for someone to get into the profession and leave to go do something else.

For those who think a career in such a dynamic and fast-paced industry eliminates the possibility of a family: Kucman and his wife Francesca have three and four-year old daughters. His proudest moment was when he delivered his youngest at home when time didn’t permit a trip to the hospital.



Across the broader construction industry there is a mix of seasoned professionals who have built companies, inspired change and set the foundation for the industry’s growth and success.

Among those seasoned veterans are young professionals who are making their own mark on the industry, charting new courses, and adding to already solid foundations to ensure the industry’s continued progress.

In future issues of the Ontario Construction Report, we want to celebrate with you all of the young leaders our industry has to offer.

Whether you represent a small family trade business or a multimillion dollar development company, we’re sure you can think of at least one (and probably multiple) talented young members of your staff who make the future look brighter for us all. Why not give them the recognition they deserve?



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