



Executive of the Month: Alan Lang, vice president and principal of Eldor Contracting-Ground-up experience drives high performance

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Question and answer with Alan Lang, vice president, principal of Eldor Contracting Corp.

Q: As one of New York's largest electrical construction and renewable energy companies, Eldor Contracting has been involved in a diverse portfolio of projects. They range from intelligent transportation, smart buildings/controls and lighting to fiber optic, telecommunications, security, generator, emergency mass transit and renewable energy/photovoltaic installations. What's the common thread that runs through all of these projects when Eldor is on board?

A: At Eldor, we use highly skilled labor for each project which enables us to consistently deliver high quality work. Our staff members have extensive experience and long tenures at Eldor. We have over 20 individuals in key positions with between 20 years to 10 years of experience. This level of expertise gives us the ability to dissect a project fully in order to solve potential problems and determine the best course of action. By applying this skill set, we can effectively maintain project schedules and achieve client satisfaction.

Q: As Eldor vice president and principal, what is your role at the company?

A: I am involved in all operations, from accounting, estimating and computer-aided design, to field operations and human resources. I have direct oversight responsibilities for these departments which encompasses the management of all personnel, including project managers, field foremen, warehousing and administrative staff.

Q: Did you come up through the ranks?

A: Yes. I've been in the field for over 30 years and have been involved in all facets of the industry. I have extensive experience in the management and build-out of fast track and special projects. With respect to my career at Eldor, I joined the company in 1986 as an electrician. I was tapped for the executive track because of leadership qualities, as well as sharing founder Nicolaus Feldmann's commitment to high standards of workmanship. I subsequently earned promotions to foreman and then general superintendent. In 1994, I was named vice president and principal.

Q: Eldor president Nicolaus Feldmann established the company over 35 years ago. How has his vision helped you and the management team continue to advance the company's steady growth?

A: Nick's grassroots upbringing has been integral to the company's growth and evolution. He too came up through the ranks so there was an assimilation of views - a common understanding of what it takes to build a strong organization. Our collective vision on management and mentoring of team members is at the core of Eldor's steady growth.

Q: For general contractors, developers and independent energy companies, what's the most important thing they should know about Eldor?

A: We want aligned members of the building, construction and energy industry to know that we are

consistently able to perform on all projects for which we have been invited to participate or subsequently brought on to assist. We are team players who support other members to complete projects on-time, on-budget and to specification.

Q: What have been some of the more exciting projects and the memorable challenges that went along with them?

A: One of our most challenging projects involved the historic renovation of the 28,000 s/f New York Police Department's (NYPD) Central Park 22nd Precinct. The stationhouse is located in the original Central Park stable complex at 86th St. and Transverse Rd. in New York City which was designed in 1871 by noted Architect Jacob Wrey Mould. The building has both national and New York City landmark status. We were directly involved in the replacement of the electrical infrastructure components. It required us to bring in a new electrical service to power all of the precinct's lighting, electrical, telecommunications, teledata, information technology and security systems, and rehabilitate all electrical components. Tight integration of the electrical and mechanical systems into the building's structure was critical. The biggest challenge we faced was to bring the main electrical service all the way from Fifth Ave. down through the center of Central Park along 86th St. and into the precinct building which is located in the middle of the park along the Great Lawn. To perform the necessary work, 86th St. had to be shut down every night and opened again every morning. In addition to this challenge, we also encountered an old New York City trolley track system and an old water main which introduced other unique challenges to the project.

Another project that comes to mind was the New Jersey Transit Penn Station project we completed 10 years ago. The main challenge was to build the entire project from 7th Ave. to 37th St. through a hatch in the street. All of the project materials had to be delivered and brought underground.

On the renewable energy side, we were brought in by EDF Renewable Energy (formerly enXco, San Diego, Ca.) to provide turnkey construction management, general contracting, electrical contracting at value-engineering services for a 12.82-megawatt (MW), 45,000 solar module project located in Suffolk County. It was the first time we were engaged in this type of a multi-phase, multi-facility project in a highly visible area and under an extremely aggressive schedule. We recently completed the fifth solar carport in this project. We had to rig into place 22, 500-kw inverters, 22 medium-voltage step-up transformers and seven medium-voltage switchgear lineups. We also have been working closely with the Long Island Power Authority (LIP) in order to coordinate the interconnection of the medium-voltage switchgear to the power grid.

Another challenging project involves the Bay Park sewage plant in East Rockaway, which was adversely affected and left virtually crippled by Hurricane Sandy. We were a preferred contractor on the electrical side requiring motors and electrical equipment to be raised above the newly established flood levels and waterproof circuitry. The priority task at hand was to facilitate the waste water treatment plant's coming back into isolated operation in order to pump sewage and prevent further health hazards.

Q: If you hadn't chosen your current career path, what other profession would you have chosen?

A: I might have become a helicopter pilot. I pursued some lessons.