



Ones to Watch Fall 2022: KJ Hong, KBE-NY

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KJ Hong
Project Executive

What recent project, transaction or accomplishment are you most proud of?

Every successful project has solid teamwork behind it. At KBE-NY, we believe the project team's everyday efforts — demonstrating dedication, loyalty, and our other core values — is what leads to great projects. As project executive, it makes me most proud to be their leader, motivating and guiding them forward.

Tell us about a mentor or role model that has influenced your career choices?

When I was young, I read my father's story about his childhood dream to build the Empire State Building. He later became a successful architect, and I decided my goal would be to follow in his steps and pursue a career in the real estate and construction industry.

What 3 skills do you consider the most important to be successful in your industry?

Construction is really all about teamwork. Successful construction teams require critical leadership, time management, and organizational skills. Leadership to guide, support, and help your team members reach the goal. Time management to honor your company's commitment and the project's deadline. And organization to coordinate many different trades and professions.

What is one lesson that you had to learn the hard way?

I trust and depend on my team, so I counted on a senior manager with excellent references and skills to deliver. A few months later, I discovered he hadn't done what we expected, and it was a tough year trying to recover what we lost. Lesson learned: trust but verify.

What do you enjoy doing when you are not working?

I love cinema! Similar to how I direct projects in real life, I often imagine myself as the movie director, thinking about how they studied the story, envisioned scenes, and coordinated so many different professions to make one film. It's like magic when everything comes together like that!