

MARCH 26, 2015

DIRECT CONNECT

Mentoring Tips:

- Try to get involved in as many different types of projects as you can. The goal is to have exposure to analysis and design using different materials and different lateral systems. They all have their own unique challenges to be solved and will help broaden your experience.
- Try to get in the field. It will help to give you a feel for what is drawn and allow you to see the different construction methods.
- Keep your engineering text books. They are a great reference to have and you will use them again.
- When using computer programs, always understand what the program is solving, know the limitations of the program and know how different inputs can affect the results. Sometimes subtle changes to the input can lead to significant changes to the results.
- Always back check yourself. We can all make mistakes. The more complex the problem being solved is, it is a good idea to do a quick back of the napkin check, to make sure the results are in line and make sense.
- Do not be afraid to ask those with more experience for their opinion/help. Leverage their knowledge. When given a new task especially something new you have not done before, ask for an example problem or sample project to follow. This may save a lot of time rather than starting from scratch.
- We spend a significant portion of our time coordinating with others including Architects, Contractors and Owners. Being able to communicate effectively is vital for a successful project. Be prepared to articulate yourself both verbally and in writing.
- Strive to always provide solutions that best meet the client's need and not what is necessarily the most convenient, easiest to do. We have to provide value to our clients (owners and architects) otherwise why hire us again?
- Designing a building is an iterative process and will evolve over time as information from other consultants is received. Being able to anticipate information (that will be supplied by other disciplines throughout the project as it develops) can help minimize the impact to your design down the road.
- When designing, always think through the load path from origination to foundations. Key design issues can be missed when this is not thought through in the beginning.