

Career Connectors: Plant Manager

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I am a materials engineer. I got my Materials Engineering degree from the Colorado School of Mines, and throughout my elementary and middle school, and high school I loved math. When I was about eight or nine, Sally Ride was one of the first women astronauts on the Space Shuttle. So, it was really about, “How can I get to be an astronaut?” And so throughout my middle school and high school years, it was trying to get to that point for me. When I went to college, I knew at that point that I probably wasn’t going to be an astronaut, but the whole idea of space and aerospace, and working with science and engineering really caught on. I decided to choose a career in materials engineering. I got to really work on what materials go into an application for a rocket or an airplane.

How I use the “4 Cs” in my job:

Communication – Communication is key, because without being able to talk to everyone and communicate your ideas, and communicate the direction for the business to go, you won’t succeed.

Collaboration – You can never do a job alone. It is not a single person’s job to do engineering, or to run a manufacturing plant. You have so many people who are involved in that, you have to collaborate.

Critical Thinking – You have to make decisions all day long and every day. So, being able to make important decisions, and know when you have to collaborate and when you have to make a decision is really important.

Creativity – Creativity is how you think. Creativity is about finding a good solution. You have to think about new ways to do things, and that’s where creativity comes into play.

“One of the surprising things about engineering is that you think about engineering as being all about data and sitting in front of a computer and looking at numbers, and what engineering really is about is people.”



What does a Plant Manager do?

- ◇ Supervise the operation of a manufacturing facility
- ◇ Ensure the plant is running efficiently and safely
- ◇ Manage employees

Useful classes to take:

- ◇ Math
- ◇ Science
- ◇ Engineering

What skills are required for this position?

- ◇ Work well with people
- ◇ Communication skills

Potential Salary Range:

\$66,000 – 151,000 according to [Glass Door](#)

My advice for students is: “Even if you love science and math, but you also love art, creativity, and working with people, engineering has a place for you, and manufacturing has a place for you. So don’t discount an engineering career just because you want to work with people, and you want to be creative in your field.”

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