

## Designing Your Own Career Path

### - Taking on Unconscious Bias -

“Is who I am right now really enough?” “Can women truly grow their careers in the construction industry?” “I want to advance, but I’m unsure if I can balance it with major life events...”

As more women enter the workforce, many are taking time to reflect on these kinds of questions—seeking careers that truly align with their values and lifestyles. Social support for women’s career development is also on the rise, with more people expressing hopes like, “I want to continue building my career after having children,” or “I want to deepen my knowledge and move forward as a specialist.”

At American Engineering Corporation (AEC), we’ve been hosting events every year in recognition of International Women’s Day, focusing on the experiences of our female employees. This year’s theme was "Designing Your Own Career Path." We welcomed career consultant Ms. Ayumi Ura as our guest speaker, who led a session exploring unconscious bias—those unnoticed assumptions that often shape the way we view our careers. The session invited us to move beyond vague expectations of our “future selves” and to take a fresh look at our potential—to “re-design” our careers with intention and clarity.



◀ ▲ Thanks to Ms. Ura’s practical examples and skillful facilitation, the session was relaxed and welcoming throughout. Each participant was able to reflect deeply and engage meaningfully.

### ◆ Sound Familiar?

“Only those who can work long hours are suited for leadership.” “If I prioritize work-life balance, I’ll miss out on promotions.” “During child-raising years, family should come before career.”

These kinds of social assumptions, even when unspoken, often limit women’s career paths. This session gave us the space to examine how unconscious bias can act as invisible barriers to fully designing our careers around our own values. Through open discussion, we reflected on how to shift our thinking and empower our actions moving forward.



▲ The session brought together employees from across departments, and thanks to the lively conversations and shared learning, the four-hour program passed quickly.

Small-group discussions also gave everyone the opportunity to hear from colleagues with different perspectives and challenges, helping to expand our collective understanding.

One participant shared, *“What really stuck with me was the idea that we can choose to make our path the right one. That mindset helped me reframe how I see my future.”* Another said, *“I now have a clearer sense of what I want to focus on and where I’m heading.”*



We held two sessions—one in AM and one in PM—with a total of 101 female employees participating. And to wrap up the day on a warm note, everyone received a small gift: fresh bread from a favorite local bakery.



◆ Our company president also shared a message of encouragement, expressing a strong commitment to building an environment where women can flourish.



At AEC, we’re committed to creating a workplace where every employee can grow and thrive as their authentic self. We’ll keep working to support meaningful, individualized career paths for everyone.