

# WTC 'Expectations' with Kamber Parker

[00:00:00] **Angela Gardner:** Welcome everyone to Women Talk Construction. Hi, I'm Angela and I'm with my co host, Christy Powell. How are you today?

**Christi Powell:** Hey Angela, doing good.

**Angela Gardner:** So Christy, we recently had a photo shoot, right? Just to kind of... Yes. How do you feel about that?

**Christi Powell:** I don't like them.

**Angela Gardner:** Why not?

[00:00:27] **Christi Powell:** I have fun with you and it's fun to like goof around but it makes me uncomfortable doing a photo shoot.

Like it feels uncomfortable. I'm sure I'm not the only one like that. But, I know how important it is, so I'm there, and I'm doing all the things that I'm supposed to be doing, but it's not my favorite thing to do.

[00:00:50] **Angela Gardner:** Well, Kamber just agreed with you.

[00:00:52] **Christi Powell:** I know. I love that. I would have never thought that.

[00:00:54] **Kamber Parker:** A lot of people are in your boat.

It's like an out of body experience, I think, for everybody in Canberra. I agree! Don't, yeah, don't feel like you're alone. And then they made me dance this time.

[00:01:05] **Christi Powell:** Oh yeah, that was... To get still shots of me acting like a complete dork. So that was even better,

[00:01:10] **Kamber Parker:** right?

[00:01:12] **Angela Gardner:** Yeah, it was a little bit different. We had, yeah.

[00:01:15] **Christi Powell:** You don't seem to mind it as much as I do. Do you enjoy it, Angela?

[00:01:20] **Angela Gardner:** I don't really mind it as much because I've kind of lived in that world a little bit, watching my sister be a model and doing a little bit of that and going to Millie Lewis and... Yeah, so it doesn't bother me as much and plus I'm not having to talk or say anything.

When if you put me in front of this mic or get up in front of an audience, that's different.

[00:01:40] **Christi Powell:** I've been talking my whole life, so I have a lot of experience.

[00:01:44] **Kamber Parker:** Where did you do the shoot?

[00:01:47] **Angela Gardner:** We went to David's studio at Muse 10. Yeah, and it was more of a studio shot because we need some shots for our graphics.

So it was kind of nice because I didn't have to direct it at all. Michael told us what to do and where to stand and what, because it was poses he needed, but let's go ahead and get started.

[00:02:04] **Christi Powell:** Yeah, we want to talk about Kamber

[00:02:07] **Angela Gardner:** Okay, let me introduce her, you know, officially. So we have Kamber Parker on and she's the founder and CEO of the YoProKnow.

And she started that back in 2018. And actually, I think I remember finding her on LinkedIn or somewhere. And I was so impressed with that. And... And how she's grown it. And of course you've won all of these awards for young professional, for, um, South Carolina woman in business for, for your company. I mean, you're doing so much great work in such a needed field, like a specialty, a niche, um, and your business offers consulting services for companies looking to increase young professionals, recruitment, retention, and engagement.

And of course, you're passionate about speaking about this at all of the events that you're invited to, and I know that personally, I seek your advice. When I'm dealing with anything that I need to structure or say to a young professional, because you have just a different take on it, a different look on it that I might not have as an older professional, I guess that's what you

[00:03:21] **Kamber Parker:** would call us, right?

Experience, that's what I call you, but you can call yourself what you want. But

[00:03:27] **Angela Gardner:** anyways, welcome, Kamber.

[00:03:30] **Kamber Parker:** Thank you so much. That was a very sweet introduction. I've loved getting to see how y'all have grown this women talk construction over the last year and a half. And I just am excited to see where it continues to go.

So I'm very lucky that I I've gotten to know you both. And so very honored to be on your show today. Thank

[00:03:48] **Christi Powell:** you again for being here. Yes. So excited to talk about some stats today. I'm a. Total nerd when it comes to, I love research. I love data to be able to drive decisions. And, um, I feel like you're really going to empower our audience with some data.

That's really going to be probably mind blowing to some people and maybe not so much to others. So I'm excited

[00:04:14] **Kamber Parker:** to just hear more. Don't worry. I know

[00:04:16] **Christi Powell:** you do. I wish we had three hours because you could probably teach us all a lot of things for the next three hours.

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So I know you've, you've uncovered some really valuable insights into what young professionals look at and want to see in the modern workforce. Can you share with us some key findings and how companies can effectively adapt their recruiting and retention efforts based on the data?

[00:05:19] **Kamber Parker:** Yeah, so going to hit you with some numbers right away, just because is, I mean, that is really the core of what we do.

It's why we are able to consult and speak and train. We have started, you know, since 2018, as Angela mentioned, I started a blog. This Yo! Prono was a blog only, and I started interviewing young professionals from across the country. One after another, and it, one kind of interesting note is each person connected me to the next interview at the time, which I think is just a really cool, like I have a really fun web that I'm trying to figure out how to distribute.

I would love to put that into a graphic because for a while there, it was, I mean, I didn't have to do the work, right? I just, each person would connect me to this next person as long as they were in a different industry and so several years in, I realized. Wow. I have thousand interviews. I could really use this.

And so thanks to a lot of mentors and leaders that I worked with, I. Had the idea and really was able to execute it, but the idea was you can really use this information to help companies and help others better understand because there were just so many overlapping themes. So I just wanted to mention that, but what is so interesting in my finding.

So since that time, we now have elevated our research and information. And we recently just actually released our first ever report this year, it's called the current state of young professionals today. Awesome. Thank you. I'm glad that you got a chance to look at that. I think what's really important to note here is our 1 of the 1st pages, it talks about the 5 main factors that influence young talent and staying and leaving a company.

And when you first look at it, if you're a Gen X or a baby boomer, you know, the silent generation member, you might see that and say, that's nothing new. That is communication has always been a problem because communication and expectations are the number one factor. It's, it's really different how different generations define communication and expectations.

They define meaningful work differently, which is the 2nd on that list. Uh, professional development, culture, ongoing education, and onboarding. They define it differently. I mean, I'll, I'll share that onboarding young professionals feel at minimum, they need three months to feel like they're set up for success in onboarding.

Yet most of the companies I talked to, they're on a timeline, right? They want to get these guys cranking, get these guys out and into the workforce. You're

seeing that data and we know that out of the thousands of people that we have talked to over the years, they're telling us that onboarding is too short.

And so companies have the decision, do they want to utilize this information or not? And so I'm not going to force them to do that, but I just think it's really impactful when you see that. So, so those are the 5 kind of impactful findings that we found and the report really dives into each of those areas.

But just. Other another thing to note that I found was very impactful from our research was compensation was not on that top five, and it doesn't mean that compensation is not important, but only about 20 percent said that it was the number one factor. But all the other people that, that shared the things that were important to them were one of those five that I mentioned already.

So it's, it's interesting. I mean, that was impactful to me when I saw that because I'm a young professional myself, I've, I've had several careers prior to taking my business full time. And so I think when leaders see that, they're going to see This is important, but we got to get these other areas, right?

So I know I talked, I just went on for a while there. So I'll pause if you have other questions, but, but yeah, that's just a little bit of context and that report, hopefully you can make available to your audience. It's free. And so I definitely encourage people to take a look at that if they can. So

[00:09:18] **Christi Powell:** you have a stat regarding how much that's costing companies, the fact that they're

[00:09:23] **Kamber Parker:** bringing people in.

Yeah,

[00:09:25] **Christi Powell:** I can't wait to hear this out loud for everybody else to hear because that was mind blowing to me. We know that it costs our company a lot of money when somebody comes in and leaves. I had no idea the impact it was making on everyone. Tell us a little bit about that stat that you have.

[00:09:43] **Kamber Parker:** Yeah. So 30 and a half billion dollars annually is that, that turnover rate for young professionals.

So across the, across the country. And that's a Gallup stat. So that's from Gallup workforce solutions. What I always like to share with that is, you know, when

you see, just think of, think of one of your companies, think of any company. Every time you lose talent, it's about one third of their salary. Right.

And when you lose them in that first year, that's, that's a big chunk, right? You're losing that in your onboarding time, because you're probably doing it too short. Yeah. And just based on what I've recognized in the, in the workforce, you are. are spending a lot of time hiring and attracting that talent.

And so all of these costs are kind of absorbed there. And so that one third really contributes to the, the greater 30 and a half, you know, 30. 5 billion mark that I just mentioned. It's really impactful because when you can keep somebody for two to five years, You know, that's a little bit more realistic.

You're going to get that investment back because if you train them the right way, if you communicate the right way, if you create that culture for them, they are going in the culture, create the right culture in their eyes. Correct. Because again, all of these, all of these things that I'm defining, they're different.

They're differently defined. by these individual generations. And so this young professional workforce has a different view on, on these areas. And so, yeah, it's, it's pretty tremendous, this impact. And so when a company can really invest and take the time as painful as it might be, right. It might take a lot of time, but if you can invest a small amount of money and then save a lot of money by retaining strong talent, the benefits are just pretty immeasurable.

I think.

[00:11:34] **Angela Gardner:** Absolutely.

And that was just young professionals, right? I'm just mind blown. I mean, that's not even all the others that are leaving,

[00:11:43] **Kamber Parker:** right? Those young professionals, which again, I mean, we have a problem. We've, we've got a problem. We, I'm, I'm all here for solutions and I, I love like building up first. And so I'll get to the solutions, but the problem is.

I mean, as you talk about in your work every day and on this podcast before, we have an aging workforce. We don't have enough strong talent that's ready to fill these gaps. And so if we're not doing something, what, like, what are we doing? Right. We've got to figure out a way to fix this problem because. 30 and a half

billion dollars is a lot of money and that's just young professionals, like you said.

[00:12:19] **Angela Gardner:** Yeah. And my next question is going to kind of get you more geared to answering that, but I would just want to say this too, that, I mean, what you're doing is not only helping the young professionals, it's helping. Everyone in the workforce be able to learn how to communicate with each other. So don't think of it as just as cameras out there helping people learn how to talk to the young professional.

It's it's communicate with everyone. You're out there bridging that gap between all the generations in the workforce and. Even in construction, it can be quite challenging. What are some of the myths or the common myths or communication barriers that, that you've identified and how can leaders overcome, you know, find solutions to foster better collaboration and understanding among the different generations?

[00:13:08] **Kamber Parker:** Yeah, I love that question because the myths and truths are really a big key component of what we talk about when we do these intergenerational communication. Trainings, um, which are actually the number, like they're the most requested training that I do. And I think that's not a coincidence, right? I think people want, they want to understand how everybody can work together.

Not just, Hey, how can we learn how to talk to young talent? Cause they know it's a, it's a holistic approach, um, that's going to work. And so the myths that I see are young professionals don't have a work ethic. They are not a strong work ethic. They just want to come in and jump to the top right away.

They want, you know, immediately come in, look for that next step and raise within three months. I'm sure people who are listening or watching probably resonate with that because I hear that often. And so there's, there's a ton of myths, but why I chose those two is because when you flip the script and you look at.

Maybe why people are, are looking at that in that way is, well, one, there's just, uh, the perspectives are off experienced professionals who claim that those are the myths are typically maybe not as open minded. I think that same thing, if young professionals have a lot of myths of their own about experienced professionals, which is what we talk about in that training, because it's very important to talk about both sides.

And so why I mentioned those two myths was because when you look and kind of peel back the layers of why young, how young professionals grew up, we grew up in a time of social media technology advancement where instant gratification, I know we've talked about this before, instant gratification of, you know, having everything about our lives, liked, commented, shared that has a direct.

Impact in the workplace. I'm we're we're seeing this as we talk to more and more young professionals every day that they're looking at, you know, coming into the job and they want that instinct gratification. They want that. They want that's why they're seeking this fast growth trajectory. I think it's 1 of the components.

I also think. The participation trophy generation where we're often called, right, especially millennials now at the risk of, you know, just don't shoot the messenger kind of thing who gave us those participation,

and it's our, it's our Gen X parents. And so I think that you can always learn a lot by looking at, you know, the generation that raised you in your environment, but I really strongly believe. That's why we're coming in to the workplace and looking for these fast growth tracks. Yet it's, it's looking like we feel like we're entitled.

It's looking like we feel like we don't have respect for authority. And there's a lot, and we, again, we could talk for three hours about the psychology behind all of this, but those are just two kind of, kind of quick examples to share. And being digital natives has had a very big impact on how we communicate and has transferred a lot of those qualities that we were raised with into the workplace.

And it's the same thing. If you were to look at and analyze Gen X baby boomers. There's a lot of, a lot of, uh, life events that impact how you operate in the workforce.

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[00:16:34] **Christi Powell:** customers grow. They convert more quotes and win more work. BuildExact is a provider of cloud based residential construction software for small builders and trades, connecting them with suppliers online for job estimating and management. Thousands of builders around the world use BuildExact to run smarter businesses.

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I found that the older I've gotten, emotional intelligence has been key to me being successful. I'm not very close minded. I grew up a different way than my young folks that are on our team, and it wasn't easy to learn how to communicate with them. But we had more in common than I thought we did once we dove in and learned more about each other.

It was just a matter of me listening and her listening, right? No matter who that was or him listening, it was just a matter of us understanding and listening to each other's perspectives to make us now we're one of the best teams ever. So at first, yeah, it was hard, but I think it's really important as.

Experienced leaders, as you would call them to, to just put your ego aside and think that you know it all and you know how to do everything. Yeah, it worked for you for 30 years, but it's not going to work for everybody. And I think that was really important for me to do is just put aside all of what I grew up understanding and learning and finding out what, what they needed first.

And I think that's being a good

[00:18:22] **Kamber Parker:** leader. He's just about to say that. Yeah. That's, that's a good leader to

[00:18:26] **Christi Powell:** me. Yeah. You just have to find out what they need first. You already know what you know, but you can't help somebody if you don't find out what they need first. Right?

[00:18:38] **Kamber Parker:** Mm-hmm. and find out how they like to communicate.

Mm-hmm. Yes. I think that's another thing that I, I hear often. It just goes in one ear, out the other, whatever I tell them. And unfortunately, just again, with, with how life has evolved and society has evolved communication styles are very different between the different generations. And it's not enough for for 1 generation to say, well, they need to do what we do, because this is what we've always done.

All generations should really become better at all forms of communication, versatile, and you can kind of upscale yourself by. Learning, if you're a baby boomer that hates to text, which I don't really find a lot of baby boomers actually hate texting, may prefer it, but if you're part of an older generation that says, well, I'm not going to text because

[00:19:27] **Christi Powell:** I've heard that a lot, but I love texting.

You

[00:19:29] **Kamber Parker:** should learn to do it. And same with Gen Z, if they're like, well, I hate talking in person or on the phone, learn how to do it. Like figure it out. Like there needs to be. This, this middle ground, I think.

[00:19:42] **Christi Powell:** Agreed. So I guess it's my turn to ask another question. Yay. So congratulations, first of all, for being recognized as a 2022 Greenville chamber, small business of the year.

That's very cool. And like Angela said earlier, it's been really interesting to watch your journey and your success, what you're doing. Um, not only for businesses, but for our community, you really care. And I think that's one of the goals of. Most people who are entering a career, they just don't want to do a job.

They want to do something that matters. That's what I found from our younger team members. They don't just want to work. They don't just want the money. They want to know that they're working for a company that's doing great things for the community that's in line with what they believe in. And so my point here is, can you share some strategies or practices that have contributed to your own success?

Of your consulting firm, because as these kids are coming out of college or maybe high school, they're seeing that they can be a consultant. They're going through some education. They're doing some things that may set them apart, right? Kind of like what you did. How do they do that? And what would be your strategy to help them create their own organizations?

[00:21:02] **Kamber Parker:** Yeah, it's such a cool question and thank you for the congrats. It's been a very cool, cool journey and it really just wouldn't have happened without a lot of people. Like, there's a lot of people behind the Yoprono name and that is really cool. I mean, I, we grew a team this year. We've got a team of. And that was not, it did not look like this last year.

And so, I mean, there are people that have helped me get from point A to point B. But as far as, you know, what the path looks like for people. I feel that it's so important to have your own journey and I can give tools and strategies. And I will, I just think that the part of my journey has, has been making a lot of everybody always says, don't say mistakes, but I have made a lot of mistakes and I've learned from them.

And so I just, I, I really have just kind of jumped 1st and, uh, that is maybe not always the right move, but I think in my case, it's, it's served its purpose, but some things that I would recommend as far as the strategy goes is. Try to say yes to as many things as you can when you're young. My first job, I said yes to everything.

And my second job, I said yes to everything. And it's, it's the people that I said yes to early on that are still in my life today. And I think that if you don't do those things when you're young, It, it can hurt you. It might take longer to achieve your goals. So I would say that's something that really helped me.

I also was not afraid to ask people for help. I have a very long list of informal and formal mentors that I call at all times because if I need to work through a problem, workshop something. They're always there for me. And so having those kind of board of directors of your life are very, very important, whether they know that they're called that in my mind or not, they really are.

And then something that I would have loved to do sooner and. You know, again, everything happens for a reason, but I would love to kind of envision and visualize the systems and processes before I got this far. And that's really, really hard to do because a lot of it, again, is working through and experiencing things and then pivoting.

But for, for younger entrepreneurs, for younger people that think that this could be a path for them, I think. You know, connections are going to be very important, but having an idea of systems is certainly very helpful. And it's cost me a lot of time this year in particular, but so much of what I've done has been testing out my market and my audience and seeing what works.

And I'm still, I'm still looking at, at what works. So I think research is very important and reading as much as you can, but. True experience definitely helps. So I, I hope I answered your question, but those are, those are just a few kind of things that came to mind when you asked that, well, a couple of

[00:24:03] **Christi Powell:** things that I just heard you say, and I'll keep it short cause we're running out of time, but go ahead and jump in five years from now, if you've put together a plan that really works and it's really working for you, you may have to do some extra work to go back and put systems and processes in place, but you don't even really know what systems and processes to put in place.

When you're researching your audience or researching the market, and I think that's really important for people to hear. They think, oh, we're not doing, we're not successful in the 1st year. It may not be 1 year. It may be a 3 to 5 year plan. And, um, it's good for folks to know that, that are concerned.

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[00:25:32] **Kamber Parker:** just get a lot of errors in place, help you and kind of hold you accountable. That's so important. And a lot of people will tell me, you know, I'm just so impressed that you you've done this in such a short amount of time. And it's like, I mean, this started as an idea in 28, 2017. I started the blog in 2018.

So it's been a long, like it's been a very long buildup and there's a lot of hours and a lot of time that people did not see. And so that is what I think is so important. And one other piece to mention too, about the community, cause you had mentioned, you know, I care about the community. I mean, I do. I think that that's the most important thing that all of us can do is give back.

And so. I want to get, I want to get the business to a place where I can give back a significant amount. I give my time right now. Not enough. I'd love to give more time, but I think it's so important for, for anybody, whether they want to be a consultant and entrepreneur or not, like we need to give back as much as we can.

And I think this next generation really, I mean, they are, we have the numbers. Like we know that's what they're looking for. So again, companies that might be listening or watching, that's another really critical piece that you can. You can easily start to, to add into your curriculum to whatever, whatever that looks like at your business.

[00:26:50] **Angela Gardner:** I love the part that you said about starting when you're young too, because I mean, I know when I was younger, I could do a lot more with my time and I didn't feel upset that I was taking away from my kids or watching me work when I was supposed to spend time with them. It's just so much easier to do that.

So I, I mean, I love that, but I'm going to speak something out loud right now for all of us, because we're all hoping this happens because I think each of our initiatives is really making huge impacts. We both want to be on the today show, right? Oh yeah. Oh yeah. The Yo Pro No and women talk construction.

We that's our dream.

[00:27:35] **Kamber Parker:** I'm trying to remember how it came up, but like one day I can't remember if I said it or you said it and you and one of us was like, we want that too. And so we're on a journey to get all three of us. On the today show. So if anyone's watching, wants to make it happen, help us. Oh yeah.

[00:27:53] **Angela Gardner:** Yeah. Because I mean, with all that you're doing with your, um, leading these workshops and speaking engagements for well, thousands of people, you're teaching them and helping them. But, and I guess we, do we have time for one more question? Yeah. Okay. So when you do all of that, maybe, and I know you've kind of touched on this a little bit.

But are there any key insights or lessons that you've learned by doing these workshops and helping these companies? Like, do you have any testimonials out there?

[00:28:23] **Kamber Parker:** Yeah. Oh yeah. We definitely, so this is my favorite part of what I do now. I love training and workshops. Who knew that I would love to facilitate this much, but.

I've, you know, just this week alone, I don't know when this exactly is going to air, but just in the month of September, I'll do four and four, three hour workshops, all with extremely different companies. I love the fact that I get to see these different industries and actions and customize the presentation to those industries, but what I always hear, I mean, this is, this is how I know it's working.

Um, you know, I, I am pretty good at reading the room now and kind of who's engaged and who's not. And this is just a really engaging conversation, right?

People love to talk about their experiences and that's what we do. We talk about how your experiences have shaped, have shaped your workplace communication.

And so the best and probably most consistent piece of feedback I get is I love that you made this not feel one sided. So you didn't come in and say, you need to do this, this, and this to make young people happy. And that is the best, the best piece of feedback you could ever, you could ever give me.

Because that means that I'm coming at it and I'm, I'm, I'm 27. I am, I'm clearly a young professional when they, when they see me walk in, because I know I don't look, I look like I'm 27. And so that, and I'm proud of it. I'm proud of it. I'm turning 28. You should be. Yeah. I wish I

[00:29:54] **Christi Powell:** could say that.

[00:29:56] **Kamber Parker:** Well, and I'm proud, but I, I'm saying that because.

I want to be taken as that middle. I want to be seen as that middle middle man, the bridge, right? As you mentioned earlier. And so when I hear that, and I've heard it consistently now, after every time I've spoken, that means that I'm doing the right thing is how I view it. So I, I really just, it's one of those, I want to do it for y'all sometime.

Like it's a really cool feeling being in those, those rooms. And I love, I love the outcomes that, that come from that. And usually there's always a, um, a game plan that those teams can then leave with and start to apply, which is always great when I hear, you know, Oh, it's starting to work, but it does take time.

Yeah. I love that. I love that too. No

[00:30:39] **Angela Gardner:** one likes to be told anything, right? I mean, no

[00:30:43] **Kamber Parker:** matter your age. Yeah. Not, no, no one wants to. Yeah. It's really, I think it's more, they don't want, like, they like that I, I approach it from the young professional side too, because young professionals need to understand how to communicate with experienced professionals.

Just the same. And so that's why Yopro next year. We're starting to talk to high schoolers and actually. Oh, I love that. I know. We're like, we're a long time

coming. So really, we've got to figure out how to help them. So the workplace they're off to the races. Yeah. Awesome.

[00:31:18] **Angela Gardner:** We should talk more about that afterwards.

Yes, we should. Yeah, we will. Absolutely. Okay.

[00:31:21] **Christi Powell:** Cool. Thank you, Canberra, for joining us today. We really appreciate your insight, and I know that what you shared was valuable information for a lot of companies, small and large, and we really want everybody to be able to know how to get ahold of you, how to get more information from you, how to learn more from you, and maybe even hire you to help their own teams.

So please share how our

[00:31:43] **Kamber Parker:** audience can get ahold of you. Yeah. So, uh, first and foremost, feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn. You can find me Kamber Parker and check out our website, [www.yoprono.com](http://www.yoprono.com). We've got a lot of resources on there, including signing up for our newsletter, which comes out once a week.

We've got free tips on attracting and retaining young professional talent, along with, uh, sharing a lot of free guides and downloads. And that's valuable. Yeah, and that way you can learn about the content we offer the content we share. And then once you're ready, we would love for you to engage with us.

We have our kind of signature 1st engagement, which is either 1 of the workshops that we talked about, or doing what we call a strategy and roadmap to help you. Basically combine your HR and marketing efforts to drive attracting and retaining top young professional talent. Awesome. Thank

[00:32:39] **Christi Powell:** you again for everything.

And she's not kidding. The resources that she has on the website are amazing. We get her newsletter. Everything that she shares on social has been very valuable to me as a company and leading a team. And I know it will be for you as well. Thank you again, Canberra for taking time with us.

[00:32:57] **Kamber Parker:** Thank you guys so much.

And I know that you're running out of time, but I have to say just a shout out to you both and just for being incredible hosts, incredible people. And I know I've said it before, but just you lift up other women and it's really so impactful. I want to do this for, for future generations. So thank you.

You're

[00:33:15] **Christi Powell:** welcome. We love it. It's what makes us smile when we go to bed and smile when we wake up, right? Thank you again. Canberra.

[00:33:29] **Kamber Parker:** Well,

[00:33:29] **Christi Powell:** that's all for this episode. Thank you so much for listening to the Women Talk Construction Podcast with your hosts,

[00:33:35] **Kamber Parker:** Christy Powell and Angela Gardner.

[00:33:37] **Christi Powell:** See you next time.