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Q. What makes a good engineer?

A. I look for someone who may not be the smartest or have the most technical knowledge, but can really identify with what engineers can do for society. There is a balance between being smart and having problem-solving skills with knowing the impact you can have on your neighborhood, community and even your county. I like to look for people who want to help society at large.

Q. Biggest changes you've seen in engineering in your career?

A. The leap in technology has been dramatic. Sometimes we can have difficulty adapting to it, but I like to see how the new generation is embracing it. We are moving in a new direction and that's good for us as a profession.

Q. Did a mentor help you along the way?

A. I've had several mentors at IDOT who've had a profound impact on me. I made so many mistakes early in my career that I lost count. But I always had someone there to help me out and get me pointed in the right direction. They got me thinking beyond the technical aspects and focusing on what projects actually mean to a community.

Q. What can a young engineer expect working at IDOT?

A. We are not old school anymore. We have new engineers, engineering technicians and technical professionals laying the groundwork to take us into the next generation and a new way of doing things.

Q. How can engineers best prepare themselves for 5, 10, 20 years from now?

A. There is a futuristic way of looking at transportation right now. You will have to be nimble and look beyond the conventional way of thinking. Prepare to be flexible and creative.

Q. Advice for someone thinking about a career in engineering?

A. Engineering is one of those fields that you can say you are making an immediate, positive impact on the people around you. That's what engineering means to me. The reward is much more than monetary.

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