



**Nancy Novak**  
Senior Vice President  
of Construction  
**Compass Datacenters**

## Mini-Interview, Compass Datacenters

**Having recently left your position as National VP of Operations at Balfour Beatty to join Compass Datacenters, you have acquired a wealth of insight into the demands and needs of various stakeholders across the prefab process. What advice would you give to an owner looking to start the team selection process on a new project?**

I would look at a number of things. I would make sure the team could demonstrate past success in interdisciplinary coordination and execution of large repeatable components for projects. I would see what kind of diversity the team had, since it's proven that more diverse teams lead to more innovative ideas and better results. I would quiz the team on their ability to overcome the challenges related to the MEP versus Architectural and Structural disciplines, specifically the design to fabrication drawings. Lastly, I would try to understand if the effort to perform work using these modern methods of construction were something the team saw as critical to the industry's future or just something they wanted to experiment with.

**Off-site construction is a growing part of large-scale projects in the current market and is only set to grow in the future. How do you perceive that this will change and benefit the face of the construction industry for the next generation?**

I see Off-site construction becoming the norm for our industry. It's becoming more and more critical to be able to do more with less. The war on talent and the lack of skilled tradespersons is upon us and only set to get worse over the next 15 to 20 years. If a firm does not get on board with normalizing Off-site manufacturing in the construction industry, they will become irrelevant or unable to compete, win and deliver the work in the pipeline.

**One of the major difficulties with multi-trade prefabrication is early collaboration and co-ordination between stakeholders. What should owners and contractors be considering during contracting and procurement of teams to ensure that their project harnesses best practices to maximize the benefits of off-site work?**

The number one way to get the most bang for the effort is to focus on where we spend most of our labor. Our projects are consistently valued at 40 - 50% MEP for the overall budget. Yet when we do space planning with our end users, we typically focus on the useable space for program requirements and then force the infrastructure into the left over spaces. This is extremely inefficient from an execution perspective as well as a functional perspective. We need to get smarter about the planning based on how we service the usable space via our MEP trades in order to maximize the benefit of taking labor off-site, improving the quality of the work and doing more with less.

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