

# GENERATION: NEXT!

## One on one with Ethan Shull of AB&I

**Danielle Galian:** What is your background?

**Ethan Shull:** I'm a Kansas City kid through and through. This is the only place I've ever lived; I still live here now. So I'm a big Royals fan. I went to a little college called the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth, Kansas. I never majored in anything so I ended up getting into the construction trade right after I got married. I was actually a commercial glazer hanging windows in high-rises in the Kansas City area.

**DG:** How did you get your start at AB&I?

**ES:** I have a friend who got me an interview with Sioux Chief Mfg. in 2006 and that's how I got into the industry as a retail sales/



Ethan Shull

inside sales position. So I have to give Sioux Chief a lot of credit because they taught me in a way that I don't think college ever could; how to be a sales person, how to tell a story about making a sale, and opportunities arose because of that and I took advantage of those opportunities until it led me to McWane where I've been with a little over four years

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**Ethan Shull is a regional sales manager for AB&I and part of the next generation in the industry. He spoke to me about his experiences in the industry and gave advice for future members. Here's his story.**

now and three years ago AB&I had an opening and I had a random chance encounter with Michael Lowe the VP of Sales and Marketing at AB&I and we seemed to hit it off. So when the opening came I was told my name was open to that and I should take advantage of it. So I did. And it's been an amazing ride every since.

**DG:** Have you always wanted or had a keen interest in the trade industry?



**ES:** As a matter of fact when I first started going to school my focus was on education, I wanted to be a history teacher. I don't have any family in the industry. So there wasn't anything that led me into this business other than I had a good friend who helped open the door for me and got me interested in that. I knew that I wasn't really meant for construction as far as being a general laborer.

**DG:** As the "next generation" in this industry, what do you think is the most important quality/trait for contemporaries to exude in business?

**ES:** Being able to relate to people and the generation before you is so crucial. There is still so much to share and a lot to give. So being able to bridge the gap between generations is something that is going to be very important for us as the younger generation now.

**DG:** This is a relationship based industry, what are some of the ways to maintain that relationship building?

**ES:** Some of the best ways to maintain those relationships is having a humbleness. I know where I came from and I know that if something happens I would have to go back to that. That goes such a long way. In the sales world there are egos everywhere. Everyone wants to be the best, everyone wants to outsell other

people. But knowing that, the people that you deal with are always going to be the same people. So you have to learn to accept and to grow together and build on top of whatever is happening.

**DG:** What's been the most rewarding part of working as a regional sales manager?

**ES:** Those relationships. And the successes that come with those relationships. It's so rewarding to know there are people out there that are of a completely different

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walk of life and certain areas and yet they're rooting for you and they're pulling for you and they want you to be successful.

**DG:** The most challenging part?

**ES:** Sometimes you're utterly helpless in being able to help them solve their situation. And they don't fully see sometimes everything we see. Sometimes there is a black and white, yes or no answer and it's not going to go



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in the favor of what you hoped it would and what they hoped it would. And so that is a very challenging part of what we do as regional managers and representing a factory.

**DG:** What are some of your hobbies and interests outside of work?

**ES:** Kid sports. I've got eight-year-old twins, a boy and a girl. And they both play soccer, basketball, softball, baseball, and volleyball. We also have a little one who just turned one. So the kids are kind of the hobby, they take up all the time which is great.

**DG:** Any personal sports interests?

**ES:** I'm a huge sports fanatic, like I said I'm a Royals fan, I love college sports. My wife played basketball in college so she's really into sports, too. That's very much our hobby, either playing or watching.

**DG:** "Top Tip" for some-

one just starting out in the industry?

**ES:** Don't be afraid to add something. It's always good to listen but it's also even better if you take a chance and add something to what's already happening. Own whatever environment you're in. If you make a mistake, learn from it. But own that moment and own that opportunity.

To learn more about Ethan, visit [www.abifoundry.com](http://www.abifoundry.com)