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Rigging Career

How many of you intentionally planned your career in the rigging industry? I bet not many! It seems as though the majority of us have surprisingly fallen into this world of lifting and rigging. Maybe you began as a young sprig working in your parents shop, or as a student trying to get whatever job you could. Possibly you began working in the shop splicing wire rope slings, assembling chain slings or sewing web slings. It is not a glamorous career by any means..... or is it?

I definitely did not think it was glamorous to be sewing web slings back in 1998 in a sling shop of 8 people, for my summer job. Sweating away trying to maneuver a twelve inch wide double ply twenty foot sling was not my idea of fun. At that point I really had no clue what I was making or what slings were used for. People were always confused when I tried to explain what it was that I did for a living. I had almost quit my job when I sewed over top of a flat hook and caused a needle to break and shoot in my arm like a bullet, leaving a nasty scar. Something kept me going, maybe call it fate. Today, eighteen years later, when someone asks me what I do for a living, I am proud to say that I have a career manufacturing products that are essential in our history, and a fundamental part of our future.

In today's world our schools and our families continuously push kids to be as successful as possible and encouraging them to reach the top. But in the last few years we have heard so many people expressing their redefinition of what success really is. Is it how much money you make? Is it your title on your business card? Is it defined by how many people report to you? I believe that success is not about money or power, but more about wisdom and wonder.

The magnificent world of rigging continues to build my wisdom and fulfill my wonder. There is always a different application for a sling that results in learning something new. It is astounding how widely used our products are in every facet of our planet. From miles under the earth crust and deep into the depths of our waters to above the clouds and beyond the stars, we can find products that we have made that are essential for our world to evolve. Our industry was crucial in

the creation of the seven wonders of the industrial world. Without the products that we all make, wonders like the Brooklyn Bridge, the Hoover Dam, or the Panama Canal would not be possible. We are a part of the gear on every hydro worker, and the gear in every fire truck. Our industry has provided products to build every house, building, skyscraper, stadium, bridge, school and church. Our products are crucial in constructing subway systems, pipelines, railways, roads and tunnels. Every day we are fabricating products that are vital for our world to advance. We have a part to help the farmers get food to our tables, to help put precious metals into our stores, to help get energy into our homes and to help manufacture all modes of transportation.

I am an Indigo and Barnes & Noble junkie, always looking for something new and interesting to read. I purchased a book called How Stuff Works. It went over how nuclear power works, how airplanes are built, how to get oil from the ground, how to mine metal. All things I realized that I already knew. It was at that moment that I realized most people need to buy the book, and they do not have the same opportunity as we do to learn how many things in our world work.

In our shop we have a board full of pictures of our products in use to show our staff. It is important for us to let them know that they are producing slings that could ultimately improve and change our future. Some days are full of stress when dealing with the pressure of getting our products to our customers correctly and on time. It is easy to get caught up in the mundane of measuring, pressing, inspecting, sewing, splicing, cutting, tagging, testing, folding, wrapping, packing and so on. When we are caught up in the middle of the day it is difficult to see the big picture that what we are doing is truly amazing!

I don't think I would say that we have "fallen" into this industry. I would change that to say we have been "lifted" up into this incredible industry. We have one of the most interesting and educational careers available. I believe the scar on my arm represents good luck and good fortune for being lifted up into a career that satisfies wonder and cultivates wisdom.