



CATCHING UP WITH THE 30 UNDER 35: BOBBY GRAHAM

January 18, 2016

We're catching up with our previous "30 Under 35" winners to see where they are now and how their perspective has changed since being named one of the rising stars of the electrical industry.

Today, we talk with **Bobby Graham**, a [2013 honoree](#).



lifter, and Dad.

How important was your mentoring (and reverse mentoring) when it comes to furthering your career?

I've always had mentors in my life, not only to help me navigate life, but to challenge me to get better. That also means giving the same message and support to those I'm mentoring. Every time I get mentored or mentor I'm re-invigorated with energy to tackle the world, dream big, and stay focus on what's important.

What is your current position?

[National Account Sales Director](#)

What has been the reaction from co-workers and people in the industry to your 30 Under 35" award?

There was certainly a lot of buzz after the article, and has been a great medal to wear on my resume. It's an honor to be apart of this elite group.

What advice would you give young professionals about electrical distribution?

Listen. Study harder and work harder than everyone around you, serve others, and provide solutions to their headaches. Provide value, and if you can't—don't ask for their business.

What recruiting advice would you give companies when it comes to hiring great, young talent?

Look for people who are stretched outside of work. Someone that active in many things likes to be challenged and grown. We should be constantly training to improve ourselves in every area of our lives, currently I'm working on become a better cook, Olympic


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What advice would you give to company leaders (c-suite) about working with Millennials?

Keep it simple. Simplify your process, request, or ask; and let them run with it. And [add more links to your communication](#). Less, Less, Less, Less, Less, [then let go](#).

What do you see in the future of electrical distribution when it comes to technology and business practices?

LED (solid state) Lighting is the [fastest changing technology with the largest growth potential, 30BB](#). That's brought both good and bad to the market place. Meaning, buyer beware", we must be cautious, we must understand what we're buying today—it changes tomorrow. We must make sure to future proof our decision, and understand a warranty means nothing with LED.

[The Internet of Things \(IOT\) has now reached the lighting industry with semiconductors on board LEDs](#). This allows us to track, manage, and predict our environment. We are seeing lighting technology adjust automatically with our environment. We can now catch perpetrators through multiple site systems, illuminating their location as the move. We can even send coupons to your smart phone as you stand at the Target end-cap.

The capital investment has been a hurdle getting the right technology to the application, which has brought cheaper alternatives, but without key components like quality, control, security, and fly-by-night companies that make big offer that don't make it to see there project illuminated—or feel the pain when it fails.



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