



For more info on Fosters, check out fosters.co.nz

Cleaning up the building sector for a brighter environmental future is a goal Waikato-based Foster Construction takes seriously.

The award-winning business is committed to ensuring the impact they have on the planet is offset, and clients can be confident their building has been constructed more sustainably and with less carbon emissions.

An important part of this commitment has given a great career opportunity to Fosters' Sustainability Lead Mitika Chaturvedi, who works with clients to calculate what their building carbon emissions will be and refers them to experts who help them offset those emissions.

WHAT ARE CARBON EMISSIONS?

Carbon dioxide emissions come from the burning of fossil fuels and the manufacture of cement. They include carbon dioxide produced during consumption of solid, liquid, and gas fuels.

Excessive use of these energies, and other inefficiencies, are frequently associated with high levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Measuring your carbon footprint allows you to determine carbon reduction opportunities, usually linked to energy and transportation. (Sources: Climate Watch Historical GHG Emissions (1990-2020). 2023; ClimateSeed.)

To find out more about this sector, profiles of young people like you in the industry, and career tools and tips...

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MITIKA CHATURVEDI
SUSTAINABILITY LEAD



The FutureForce® Crew sat down with Mitika to chat about her role...

TOP CAREER TIP

THERE'S A LOT OF DIFFERENT PATHWAYS TO REACH THE SAME END GOAL. WHAT YOU NEED TO FIGURE OUT IS WHAT PATHWAY IS GOING TO RESONATE THE MOST WITH YOU AND HELP YOU KEEP PUSHING ON.

→ WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR ROLE?

At Fosters, we are Toitū enviromarked diamond and Toitū carbon zero certified, and those are some key certifications in New Zealand to show you have environmental controls in place and you're measuring the environmental impact of your organisation to a certain level.

With carbon zero it is all about measuring carbon emissions and how we can reduce and offset them, so that is why I'm part of the process. The rest of my role is around site recycling, using products that are better for the environment, how can we help clients understand that building sustainably doesn't mean you're going to build more expensively.

→ WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR JOB?

That I get to make a positive impact everyday. It is something that will contribute to a better future, which is quite cool!

→ HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INTO WORK?

I started as a Project Administrator on the Fosters team and then started looking after sustainability for one of the projects. When the opportunity came up, I was asked if I'd like to look into it more and do one of our key audits which is our Toitū carbon zero audit.

→ WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT WORKING AT FOSTERS?

It's such an approachable business. Our CEO knows everyone's name which is over 200 people, and he doesn't just know their name but he actually knows about them. So, when you work with a company where the person at the very top embodies the values, you don't just feel like a number. And there's opportunities to give feedback without feeling like you're going to be shot down.



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WHAT SCHOOL SUBJECTS ARE IMPORTANT FOR THIS WORK?

- Chemistry – Because it helps you understand what the greenhouse gases are and how things impact each other
- Maths – You are running through a lot of data and you need to understand how that data makes an impact
- Business Studies – It helps you understand that at the end of the day you're doing this for a business. It's always good for me to understand what the impact will be on the business before I pitch it to the board

→ WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

A lot of it has been learning on the job, because this is such a growing and new role in general. I can't just go and get a specific degree and then feel that I've learnt everything. It's constant learning.

→ WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO WITH YOUR CAREER?

Maybe be able to project manage sustainable builds in the future. There's so much to learn in my field and there's so many opportunities out there, so I'm still kind of figuring it out at this stage.

→ WHAT SORT OF PERSON DO YOU NEED TO BE FOR THIS WORK?

I think you need to be patient, passionate and resilient to understand that a core part of the role is around changing habits of people who have been around for longer than you've been born! So you cannot expect change to happen overnight! It's important to not let that frustrate you.

→ WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE ELSE LOOKING AT THIS TYPE OF WORK?

That this role has so many transferrable skills. The things I've learnt can be applied to so many different industries so you do not need to think that this is just something you can do in construction. It is basically something you're going to be able to do in any industry, so find where you would like to make that impact, and you'll probably going to be able to manage to do it.

→ WHAT DOES SOMEONE NEED TO KNOW WHEN STARTING OUT AT WORK?

You're not expected to know everything on day one or day two or even day 100! You've just got to show up with a good attitude and be willing to learn and give it your best shot.

→ WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR KEEPING BALANCED AND MANAGING STRESS?

Number one is to remember to be grateful. I think it has such a positive impact on your outlook for everything, and two, try to keep work at work and home at home. Learn to shrug things off, otherwise you will never really stop and you'll never really switch off.

