

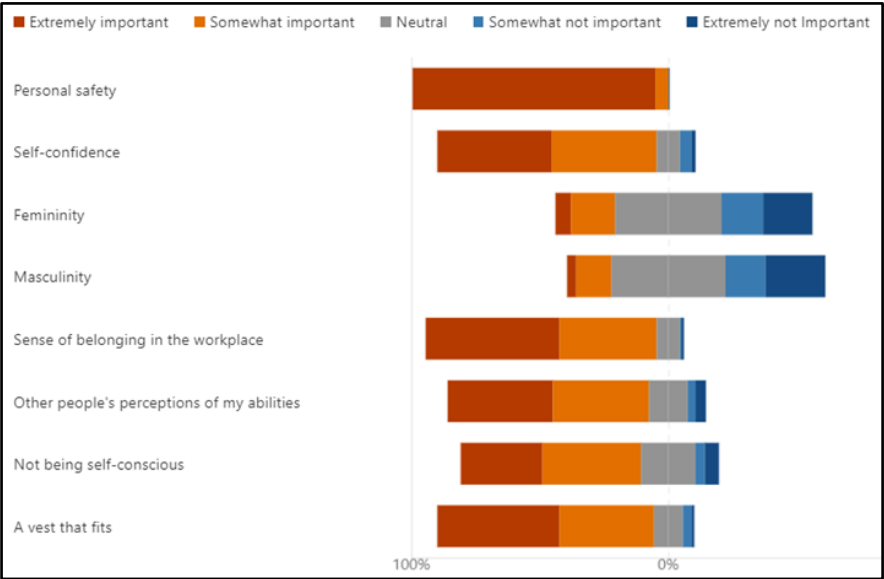
Fitting In: Analyzing the Fit of Safety Vests in the Construction Industry



The construction industry continues to be a male-dominated industry; however, recent decades have seen a change of demographic, including an increase of women leadership. With the changing demographics, there is a lack of awareness and proactive integration of properly fitting safety vests to accommodate different body types. A properly fitting safety vest is crucial in upholding the safety of individuals working on a construction site, where certain genders are more frequently caught on jobsite material. These circumstances hinder the purpose and functionality of the safety vest’s primary functions, which, for the wearer, is increased visibility and the comfort to carry out their duties. The findings of this study show that improperly fitting safety vests impact the sense of belonging of different genders by creating a workplace environment that is not welcoming. This matter corresponds with the impacts on confidence, self-esteem, and perception of abilities, whom respondents feel are adversely affected. The majority of respondents believe a properly fitting safety vest is crucial for the construction industry, however a majority have not asked their companies to provide one, specifically women. If provided with one that was designed to fit their body type, respondents are in favor of wearing it over the standard industry sizes.

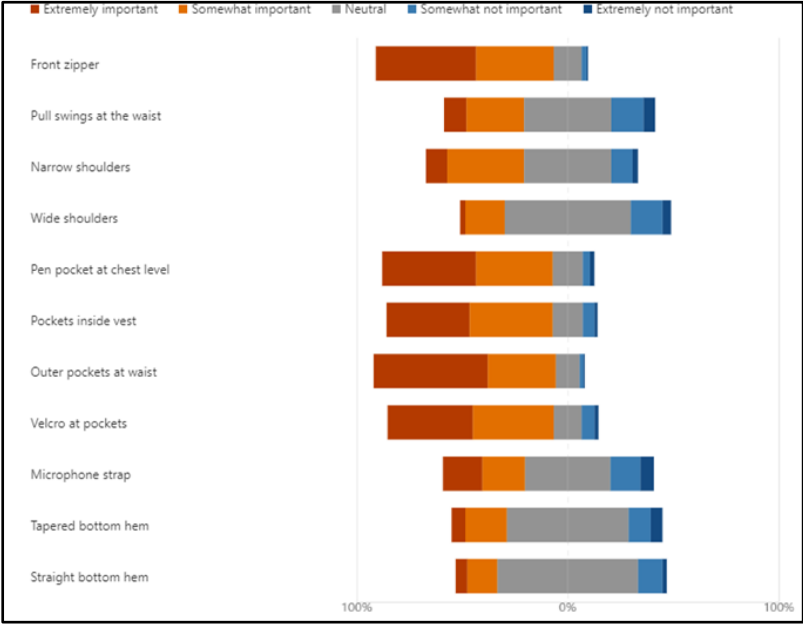


Key Words: Safety Vests , Women in Construction, Inclusive Workplace, Safety, Confidence



Identify the level of personal importance you give to each of the items below while working on a construction site.

Written Responses
“My safety vest catches on sharp edges all of the time... I never realized how much of a hazard it can be until I started to experience it.”
“I feel like I can get snagged on hooks and sharp objects/corners much more easily.”
“It makes you feel like a child wearing a hand-me-down. The oversized vest makes you physically feel and appear smaller and that you don’t fit the ‘shoes’ for the job.”
“Being told by men on the work site that I look like a "child" because of my oversized vest has often made interaction with them difficult i.e., they don't take me seriously despite being the lead engineer on a project.”



Rank the following safety vest specs based on your notion of importance.

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