

FLORIDA LIGHT & POWER

ESTABLISHING JOINT GOALS TO ORGANICALLY GROW WORKFORCE



Following Hurricane Michael in 2018, Florida Power & Light (FPL) ramped up their Underground Hardening program in their Distribution grid. The program installs new underground conduit to existing residential and light commercial facilities. FPL pursued a turnkey contracting model and selected Irby Construction as a partner on this project. Irby's program workflow is:

Customer Outreach > Design Engineering > Permitting > Construction > Restoration

FPL sees benefit in retaining the Purchasing piece of the work, so they are responsible for design approval and purchasing materials after the design engineering is complete by Irby. While FPL purchases the material, Irby is still responsible for managing the laydown yards and reconciliation of material. This contracting and work scope model is referred to as EpC.

FPL identified one of the largest challenges of this new program was attracting the necessary workforce and talent without disrupting the existing contractors and the work they were already performing for FPL. Irby Construction was able to start on the Engineering immediately in 2018 and the Engineering and Permitting process gave them a few months to start assembling and attracting the construction labor that was required to start in 2019. Field labor required included:

- Directional Boring crews
- Overhead Line crews
- Underground Line crews
- Customer Service Representatives

Irby had existing crews in the region, but needed to grow them to meet the targets of this program. They specifically targeted young talent who were attracted to the robust benefits offered by Irby and the industry-leading training that Quanta offers. The new recruits were also drawn to the long-term job prospects in the industry as a part of a larger organization like Quanta, along with the potential opportunities to move from Labor to Leadership.

Irby also paid special attention to the skillset of the talent they were acquiring. Early in the project Irby noticed that women were more effective at interfacing with customers when performing Customer Outreach, obtaining Right-of-Way changes, and maintaining contact with customers throughout the project. The Irby team kept that in mind whenever they entered a store or restaurant in the community, constantly looking for the right attitude and appropriate customer service mentality to serve the FPL program and ultimately their customers.

While it is possible in certain markets to add 100 new Technicians focused on Smart Meter installations in 4 short months, the skillset and training required for a Lineman inherently takes longer. Without impacting "base" local craft skill resources, in 18 months Irby has grown to 27 crews to meet the needs of the FPL hardening program, with expectations to double its workforce in early 2021 to stay on course with FPL's projections of their hardening program investment. The key to organically growing a workforce over time is based on establishing joint goals and together working towards them. FPL and Irby Construction have illustrated a great example of that today.

