



Tawana

Tawana has been a member of the Performance Material development team for six years. She began her career in the oil and gas industry before joining BASF in 2015.

Q: Tell us a little about yourself?

A: I have a Bachelor of Science in Biology with a minor in Chemistry from Texas Southern University and I'm currently pursuing my MBA with a concentration in Supply Chain Management from the University of Houston. In my spare time, I like to participate in 5k charity walks and fun runs, two years ago I did a spartan run which was awesome. I love spending time with my family; we enjoy outdoor activities like riding bikes and walking.

Q: What is your current role?

A: I was recently promoted to Technical Service Lab Specialist. This role involves product development from start to finish. This includes but not limited to formulating, blending, and spraying of urethane systems.

Q: What changes have you seen in the spray industry over the years?

A: Technology changes. We've transitioned from HFC to HFO technology. Though we still use HFC's in some states, many are transitioning. That's the major change I've seen.

Q: What challenges have you faced working in this industry?

A: I have faced a couple of challenges while working in this industry. One challenge was the physical aspect of spraying. In a lab setting we usually experience more hot vs cold extremes, especially in Houston. I learned to be strategic in the way I work. If I had to spray a lot of panels, I would do it in 10-minute increments (because the hose can get heavy). I would try and take breaks as needed. I also had no experience with equipment, so this was a bit of a challenge for me in the beginning, but I got up to speed. The last challenge was learning to spray, which was difficult for me. I think this was more of a confidence thing. I had to do a lot of practicing; counting my strokes helped me a lot. I watched other sprayers, but I think just building my confidence and practice helped the most.

Q: What advice would you have for women interested in the industry?

A: I would advise them to do their research, this is true for every major decision a person makes. Have an open mind, get different perspectives. Find a knowledgeable person in the industry that you can speak with, ask questions, and watch them work if possible. This is a rewarding industry; I have enjoyed it and look forward to continuous learning and growth.

