



Leroy Covington

Continuous Improvement Black Belt

Why did you decide to join Air Products?

I had the opportunity to intern twice while in grad school, once in Allentown at world headquarters and once at a field location in Pasadena, Texas. I joined Air Products for three key reasons:

First, during my first internship, I got plugged in to the Black Employee Resource Group and was put in contact with people who genuinely seemed to care about my summer experience and future career both inside and outside of Air Products.

Second, the Career Development Program (CDP) was attractive to me because the company culture supported talented, young engineers to become well-rounded by experiencing roles in different areas of the company. Further, they did not mandate that engineers take only roles in engineering; this form of professional freedom was very appealing to me.

Third, as an intern, I met with several key leaders in senior executive roles including our then-CEO. I was impressed that notable company leaders made themselves accessible and took time out their schedules to share their insight. This was important to me, as I always seek to develop genuine working relationships with leaders for organizations for which I am involved.

Why do you love working at Air Products? What is it that keeps you working at Air Products?

I truly believe that through continued hard work and exceptional performance, I have the opportunity to achieve my career goals of serving in influential, decision-making leadership roles.

Please describe your career at Air Products to date.

As a CDP, I held assignments in Global Engineering as a process design engineer on the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Engineering Team, Global Operations as a plant process engineer at our LaPorte, Texas, HyCO III facility in Texas, and Industrial Gases R&D - Americas region, as a product development engineer in the Water Systems Group.

I then rejoined Global Engineering as a project engineer in the Cryo Systems Engineering

Team, working on an integrated gasification combined-cycle power plant project. In 2010, I had the opportunity to further support this project as I transitioned to the role of start-up engineer. In this role, I also provided start-up support for an ASU in China, a liquefier project in Mexico, and site safety supervision for LNG train repairs in the Middle East.

I then moved into a project development engineering role, supporting our non-air cryogenic business. Later, I was appointed to a black belt position within the Engineering Continuous Improvement group, leading multiple projects that looked to reduce estimating variance for valves/instruments and construction within the Cryo Systems Engineering team.

What is the most intriguing/satisfying thing you've since you've been at Air Products?

The first time I was given the opportunity to work in the Middle East for five weeks, supervising a repair for one of our LNG customers. I gained valuable, frontline leadership experience and exposure working with our international customers. More importantly, I experienced personal growth—several of my preconceived notions regarding the cultural norms of some countries in the Middle East were challenged and destroyed.

What career advice would you give to those just starting out in their engineering careers?

I would advise young engineers to focus their energies on learning everything they can about the positions they are in now and how their positions relate to supporting the business. I would also add that there is no substitute for hard work and delivering high-quality results. The most successful engineers have this mentality engrained into their core philosophy.