

# SARA D. LEES, MBA

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## SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER – REGISTERED ARCHITECT

GLOBALLY SAVVY, AWARD-WINNING LEASE MANAGER AND SITE DEVELOPER



### VALUE TO ORGANIZATION

15+ YEARS DRIVING ROI THROUGH EXECUTION OF SITE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND EXPANSIONS WORLDWIDE:

- ◆ Saved millions while delivering \$100M+ in capital projects for BIG BIZ over 5-year period.
- ◆ Oversaw successful, deadline-driven construction of \$56M new TTT/Big Biz Corporate Headquarters (US) and international sales offices (US, Asia, Latin America).
- ◆ Winner: National Leadership in Environmental and Energy Efficient Gold Award.

### KEY SKILLS

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|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| ◆ PROJECT MANAGEMENT    | ◆ SITE DEVELOPMENT       | ◆ CUSTOMER SERVICE  |
| ◆ STRATEGIC PLANNING    | ◆ BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT   | ◆ GROWTH MANAGEMENT |
| ◆ CONTRACT NEGOTIATION  | ◆ MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS | ◆ P&L MANAGEMENT    |
| ◆ OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT | ◆ ARCHITECTURAL PLANS    | ◆ TEAM BUILDING     |

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT HISTORY & PERFORMANCE

*Contributing experience in positions including: **Real Estate Project Manager and Director of Real Estate / Facilities – BIG BIZ** ⇨ **Management Consultant – Realty Co.** ⇨ **Partner Design and Construction Team – Blackbird Company** ⇨ **Architect and General Contractor***

**ARCHITECT, GENERAL CONTRACTOR, CONSULTANT** – Austin, TX 2002 to present



**Provided powerful artistic and financial leadership for residential and commercial projects.**

- ◆ **Commercial:** Brought new life to Montessori School kitchen by spearheading \$40K new facility design and construction (2011-2012).
- ◆ **Residential:** Transformed lackluster kitchen, living room, dining room, and outdoor covered living space of a residence to a modern paradise. \$140K budget (2008-2010).
- ◆ **Financial:** Successfully managed investment portfolio during down economy by following trends and engaging in continuing education; focused on energy as viable investment sector.

**BIG BIZ** – Austin, TX 1997 to 2002

**REAL ESTATE PROJECT MANAGER (2001 – 2002)**



**Piloted strategic planning phase through move-in for seamless 14-month transition to TTT Software's \$56M award-winning corporate headquarters: 200,000SF, 5.5 level building + 650-car parking garage.**

- ◆ **Procurement:** Saved \$500K/month in lease holdover payments by delivering project on time and within pre-approved capital budget. Procured equipment and infrastructure totaling \$8M.
- ◆ **Communications:** Smoothed over flailing internal communications during campus move of 700 staff: educated employees on project status and informed them of how their concerns were being addressed. *Project recognized by General Manager for zero escalations and exemplary customer satisfaction.*

### Standout Performance in Commercial Site Development and Sustainability Initiatives:

- ◆ Best Commercial Office Project, *City Business Journal*
- ◆ National Leadership in Environmental and Energy Efficient Gold Award

## BIG BIZ (CONT'D)

## DIRECTOR OF REAL ESTATE AND FACILITIES, TTT Software, BIG BIZ (1997 – 2001)

⇒ *Delivered infrastructure and facilities to support quadrupled company growth (\$350K to \$2B) and leap from 300 to 4000 employees in < 5 years, while shrinking costs. Opened 30+ sales offices in 24 months.*

- ◆ **Cost Reductions:** Cut \$750K in annual rent expenses, \$300K in break room expenses and \$300K in utility expenses through workspace and process enhancements.
- ◆ **Staff & Operational Management:** Led staff of 40 at HQ and field offices responsible for strategic planning, leasing, construction, and daily operations of 600,000SF / 50+ leases worldwide.
- ◆ **Budget Management:** Managed annual capital budget of \$5M and expense budget of \$77M.
- ◆ **Acquisitions:** As Merger & Acquisitions team representative, performed pre-acquisition lease research, reporting and integration management that resulted in addition of 20 new sites and 600 employees.
- ◆ **New Facilities:** Piloted \$48M build of TTT Software Development Lab (1999-2000): 200,000SF, 4-Level structure including lab, data center and cafeteria. Delivered on time and \$2M under budget.

## STATUS REALTY CORPORATION – Austin, TX

1994 to 1997

## MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

⇒ *Enhanced ROI through management consulting services (e.g., site selection, architectural project management, strategic planning) to Fortune 500 clients across the U.S., Asia and Latin America:*

- ◆ **Key Clients:** BIG BIZ/TTT Software, Novell Computer, GTECH Casino, University COOP Bookstore.

## BLACKBIRD COMPANY – Austin, TX

1987 to 1994

## PARTNER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION TEAM

⇒ *Transformed Austin's retail landscape as founder/owner of in-house design & construction firm with \$1M annual sales:*

- ◆ **Retail Projects:** Managed design and construction of cutting edge retail powerhouses, including: The Arboretum, Westbank Market, Brodie Oaks, and The Market at Wells Branch.
- ◆ **Key Tenants:** Randall's, HEB, Chili's Restaurant, On the Border Restaurant, Dan McKlusky's Restaurant, Jason's Deli, Block Buster, Arboretum Theatre.

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**EDUCATION**


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**University of Texas – Austin**, Austin, TX

Masters of Business Administration

**Kansas State University – Manhattan**, KS

Bachelor of Science, Interior Design

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**CERTIFICATIONS**


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Registered Architect, State of Texas

“Sara excels in SOLVING problems, both internally and externally. Whether it be a title or leasing issue, or a communications challenge, Sara drives the process forward and gets the job done.”

- Victor Allen, BIG BIZ

Sara was seeking to re-enter the workforce after ten years as a stay-at-home parent. She had also dealt with some medical issues during that ten years, but did not want to reveal them. Prior to leaving the workforce, Sara had been a very successful project manager at a large computer manufacturing company. When she first came to me, however, she saw herself as a stay-at-home mom with a 10-year history of working on small projects that didn't fully reflect her goals. Her first entry under experience was "Lees Family" and she described her projects in only vague terms.

We needed to find a way to make Sara's experience as relevant as possible to her target position as a lease manager/site developer at a large national company. Overall, our strategy was to prioritize Sara's project management experience, while leveraging her architecture background as a secondary emphasis to distinguish her from other project managers.

In order to paint Sara as a powerful driver of projects for large multi-national companies, we created a Value to Organization section to presence her success in corporate environments. The summary at the top of her experience section (*Contributing experience in positions including:...*) deflects attention from the fact that her most relevant experience was many years ago, and asserts up front that she is a driver who contributes to corporations like BIG BIZ. In the first experience entry, we took focus off the volunteer nature of her recent projects, focusing instead on making them relevant.

In the final product, her ten years of "not working" are almost indistinguishable from her other accomplishments.

At the time of this writing, Sara had submitted her resume to one company; when she followed up, she got recognition from the hiring manager: "I saw a large emphasis on architecture and construction/ development so I do recall your specifics." That's what we were aiming for.