A Sean Story: AHU Lift at the Office Tower for a Research Lab Project - The Engineering Orchestra

As I reflected on my past projects, I wanted to share something truly remarkable—and this story while working with Sean immediately came to mind. He's great at logistics, planning, and execution, and his leadership on one of the most exciting projects I've ever been part of left a lasting impression.

The challenge? Installing a massive Air Handling Unit (AHU) on the upper floor of an office tower. Sounds simple? Not when the service elevator is too small to fit the equipment, the crane path to the floor is obstructed, and the AHU itself has the footprint of a tiny apartment.

The Breakthrough Plan

Sean had a clear vision and a knack for turning complex challenges into streamlined solutions.

Break It Down

The AHU was disassembled into manageable segments. Each piece was carefully dimensioned to fit through the only possible access route: as I recall a 50" x 50" opening in the building's glazing. Sean worked closely with the mechanical contractor and equipment supplier to ensure the disassembly would still allow for seamless reassembly and proper functioning post-installation.

Structural Coordination

The weight of the individual components being shipped was calculated and provided by the equipment manufacturer and distributed across the floor plan to avoid overloading any one area. Sean coordinated with the structural engineer to gain approval for the temporary layout.

Rigging and Flooring Setup

A temporary plywood flooring system with a slope was constructed, enabling pump carts to move materials safely and efficiently from the rigging area to their designated spots on the floor.

The Glazing Removal

Sean organized the removal of the glazing panel to create the access point. The glazing team worked in tandem with the delivery schedule, ensuring no unnecessary delays.

Crane Planning

The crane lift was nothing short of a logistical ballet. A plan was developed with precision:

- The crane was stationed on the front facade at ground level.
- A single lane of the street was cordoned off with the city's approval for the delivery truck.
- Permits were obtained, and every single shipment was pre-coordinated down to the minute—no room for error.

Two Crews, One Symphony

The delivery was executed with two synchronized crews—one on the roof managing the rigging and one on the ground prepping each segment for the lift.

The Grand Finale

The lift went smoothly. Once on the floor, the AHU was reassembled, tested, and commissioned without a hitch.

It wasn't just the size of the equipment or the complexity of the lift that made this project memorable. It was Sean's leadership, attention to detail, and ability to align multiple stakeholders, from mechanical contractors to structural engineers.

Why This Stood Out

I've seen big lifts before—tower cranes swinging colossal equipment into open spaces. But watching an AHU broken down into surgical components, maneuvered through a glazing window, and assembled like a life-sized puzzle was something completely new.

Appreciation Post for Sean

Here's to Sean. Watching you lead this project was like watching a maestro conduct an orchestra. Every detail—from disassembly plans to structural approvals to delivery schedules—was executed with professionalism.

SEND IT!