

# Jovan Larre

## B.Sc. Wood Products Processing (2003)

**“I love the excitement of manufacturing, the fast-paced work environment and endless opportunities!”**



**Job Title:** Production Planner

**Company:** Superior Cabinets ([www.superiorcabinets.ca](http://www.superiorcabinets.ca))

**Location:** Saskatoon, SK

**Size of the Company:** 300 employees

**Years with the Company:** 5

**Education:** Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology; Bachelor of Science in Wood Products Processing (University of British Columbia); Certificate in Process Mapping

You could say woodworking is in Jovan’s blood. Her family works in the business, and her father was a board member at Superior Millwork for many years. Initially, Jovan tried to make it in the audio recording industry. After attending the Ontario Institute of Audio Recording Technology, she found that the work wasn’t what she had expected, and decided to make it a hobby rather than a career. Upon returning to the family business, Jovan’s father encouraged her to enroll in the UBC Wood Products Processing program. Two years into the program, Jovan realized that this was the perfect industry for her.

**Key Responsibilities:** Production planners are responsible for the micro-scheduling of the plant. They work with other departments within the company, such as the IT department, to improve current systems and flow within the plant.

**Skills Required:** Computer skills and detailed knowledge of operations and equipment are very important, as are the abilities to troubleshoot, self-motivate, organize, and manage projects. People skills are also a great asset. The job is ideally suited to someone who loves the manufacturing process, who is open-minded and creative, who looks for the not-so-obvious solutions, and individuals who are able to work by themselves.

**Why She Loves Her Job:** Because it is different each day. There is always something to learn and something to fix. The more she learns, the more diverse her job becomes as Jovan comes to understand processes and systems better. Jovan has found that she can be analyzing data one day and operating machinery the next. She also loves the excitement of manufacturing, the fast-paced work environment and the endless opportunities!

**Previous Employment & Co-op Experience:** Jovan ran her own landscaping company in high school, through which she gained an awareness of business principles, customer relations and time management. During her time at UBC, she participated in the co-op program, working for a total of 20 months at Knoll in Toronto, SMED International (now Haworth) in Calgary, and North Eden Timber in Australia. She found working at SMED especially valuable in terms of her current position, as it was a larger company with advanced technology and innovative ideas. Since graduating from UBC, Jovan has worked at Superior Cabinets in various positions. For example, as a wood processing specialist, she coordinated production machinery workflow, dealt with installation and evaluation of new machinery, and wrote policies, processes, guidelines, and summary reports.

**Most Relevant UBC Course:** Plant layout and design course

**Most Relevant High School Courses:** Physics, Calculus and Industrial Art

**Advice for Prospective Students:** The secondary wood products industry is growing, and there are so many improvements to be made. There is no shortage of jobs out there! If you are really interested, find a summer job at a manufacturing facility - even the most menial job will get your foot in the door so that you can see what's really going on.

**Advice for Current Students:** Make connections with other students in your classrooms because they will be in the industry afterwards, and they are a great resource!

**Advice for Females:** Go for it! There are more and more females in the industry as time goes on. The job that Jovan is currently doing is very male dominant, but if that is a concern, there are many jobs in the industry that are more female-friendly.

It is tough. You definitely have to prove yourself to each and every person. You need to be strong to ensure what you say or do is taken seriously. Having said that, it is getting better all the time! Jovan has found that older men are always shocked at first to be dealing with a woman, but usually they are pleasantly surprised by her knowledge.

**Career Highlight:** Jovan was recently invited to speak at the Atlanta Wood Finishing Conference, and based on feedback from the organizers she did a phenomenal job! Jovan discussed the process of installing a flatline finishing line at one of the plants, outlining everything from the decision making process to the setbacks encountered along the way.

**Plans for the Future:** Jovan would like to continue increasing the plant's efficiency. She is considering pursuing a Masters in Business Administration (MBA), or completing a diploma in business/ project management. Either qualification would allow her to do her job better, including managing and executing bigger projects.