



## SUCCESS STORY

# Criterion HCM Overcomes Integration Obstacles

### INDUSTRY

Construction

### ABOUT

Pepper Construction is a general contracting company that employs more than 750 people who serve countless individuals in regions across the Midwest using healthy materials and efficient systems to transform tomorrow.

### GOAL

Acquire a better HCM solution for the company

### RESULTS

Criterion provided an exemplary HR system that does everything the company needed and more to meet all of the specific needs for Pepper Construction.

## Only Provider that has the 'secret sauce' for success with Construction & Architectural ERP solution

Imagine you needed a Human Capital Management system for a construction company. And not just any construction company, but a \$1 billion general contractor geared toward marquee and specialty projects with five offices throughout the Midwest.

When Julie Kellman, SHRP, SCP-SHRM, CCP, took the job with Pepper Construction as Director of Compensation and Benefits, she thought there would be a swarm of developers descending on company headquarters when she needed a system for HCM. Like many large companies, the Affordable Care Act and 1095 form requirement meant their current process for benefit administration was not going to cut it anymore. Pepper Construction has more than 500 employees, an additional 500 trade workers, and is signatory to local unions in some of their markets.

Kellman started out with a limited benefits administration system, but as time passed they had to add several modules and heavily customize the software. Then Pepper Construction adopted a popular ERP for architectural, engineering and construction organizations in North America.

The industry-specific ERP offers a payroll module, but it does not include any administrative or HCM support. When Kellman began casting about for a better solution in early 2018, she talked to 24 different vendors. Once those vendors found out the connection was to a custom platform, most found it to be too challenging.

"Criterion was willing to engage with us. My assistant was threatening to send me to HRIS Anonymous. The required integration with the ERP payroll module was a conversation ender with everyone else."

Pepper Construction went live with Criterion in July 2018.

"Pepper is known for leveraging the most advanced technology to deliver real value. I needed a state-of-the-art HR system, and Criterion were the only ones who could partner with us to deliver what we need," Kellman said. "So, we forged a relationship to get the systems to work. As it stands now, Criterion has done everything we've asked them to do."

Since coming online, Kellman says employees love having one unified portal for everything HR. "They don't have to go to four different places to do something, whether it's to update their list of dependents or watching training-on-demand videos."



And for those working in HCM functions, Kellman appreciates that Criterion is completely customizable, down to the font and color on screen. "It takes five minutes if I need to add a message screen," she said. "We can do it all, we don't have any need for programming or development beyond things we've asked Criterion to add."

Kellman praised Criterion and says, "Because our needs were so specific and we had significant improvements to make, partnering with a platform that has reliable technology was exactly what we needed. And they are responsive," Kellman continued. "We're moving to the final test, which is parallel payroll processing. I have to temper Criterion's ability to accomplish requests with the time it might take to get it done, but they deliver." Kellman said she couldn't get that kind of responsiveness out of much larger companies in her previous roles.

"I've learned that with a software company, you're not just buying the application, you're buying the people behind it. Sometimes you focus on the application and forget you need the people behind it. And that's the secret sauce."