

## HEALTH CARE, SENIOR HOUSING &amp; LIFE SCIENCES

# Life Sciences and a conversation around building efficiency into the built environment

*In an industry that depends on getting product to market quickly, inefficiencies and project delays can have large, costly, consequences.*

On a windy and cold January afternoon with an impending snowstorm causing a mass exodus from the downtown Denver office towers, Dan Gray, Business Development for Health Care & Life Sciences at elements, sits in a wingback chair with a hot cup of coffee ready to talk about a thriving industry that has captured his attention and admiration: Life Sciences.

Colorado is home to more than 700 life science companies that directly employ over 30,000 people with most of them concentrated in the Front Range. With over 30 years of experience working to improve health and wellness through innovation in the built environment, Gray is creating connections between these companies and those at elements that can help them achieve their goal of bringing lifesaving medicines and research to market as quickly as possible.

**TW: To start, explain to me why you are so passionate about this industry.**

**DG:** This is a heartfelt mission for me. I want to spend my years contributing to the quality of life of society as a whole, and these organizations are on the front lines of that work. This is global, life changing, blow your mind stuff. In our own little way, we (those of us focused on this sector at elements) want to help these companies further the science and impact for our global community.



**Dan Gray**

Business Development,  
Healthcare  
+ Life Science at  
elements



**Tess Wilson**

Director of  
Marketing at  
elements

**TW: How are you and others at elements helping contribute to that mission?**

**DG:** The studios, and people, within elements are uniquely positioned to coordinate multiple products and services in a living, breathing, project process that is very complex. So much time is wasted, costs are added, because project managers, general contractors, etc. are spending extra time trying to make connections and coordinate schedules between trades. We can help alleviate some of that extra work. Any level of engagement from the element's studios will help build efficiency into a project.

**TW: Can you walk me through an example of that?**

**DG:** In a life science facility there are some highly specialized product requirements like epoxy floors, lab casework and wall systems, fume hoods, furniture, and more. The coordination of these need to go hand-in-hand on a job site per the schedule, but they often don't because you've got different subcontractors – often more than one flooring contractor, multiple contractors for those premanufactured construction elements like walls, casework, and fume hoods – and this turns into a big logistical challenge for the general contractor ultimately

costing time and money for the client who wants to focus their spending on their research. The fact that elements, under one master project manager, can quarterback multiple areas of a project scope and ensure smooth coordination to keep things on track is huge.

**TW: Why is that important?**

**DG:** Oh, it's hugely important. And it might be easier to understand through an example of when it went wrong: There was a project where the lab casework and fume hoods were provided by an out-of-state vendor who sold the product direct to the owner, but still needed to coordinate with the general contractor and other trades like flooring, electrical, plumbing. All the normal cast of characters. The casework vendor did not participate in the GC's planning meetings and shipped all of their product direct to site. Without warning, semitrailers show up without anywhere to store the product, no labor to unload it, and the installation team (hired by the out-of-state vendor) was flying in from New York with a limited two-week window to install everything.

The general contractor had to call in the flooring contractors early, which happened to be us (Floorz by elements) because the casework had to be installed on top of finished floors. So, we had to patch in areas of flooring that the casework could be set somewhere by these installers who were only going to be in town for a limited time.

**TW: So how would elements add value in a situation like that?**

**DG:** Under one elements project manager, we can quarterback

flooring, lab casework, vent hoods, modular construction, window coverings, furniture, environmental graphics, wayfinding and signage, and so much more. The more areas of the project scope that are entrusted to us, the smoother the experience will be because we are going to manage it flawlessly at the local level.

Think of us as the GC's best friend. In this situation, we could have eliminated the surprise deliveries, would have been able to communicate and coordinate the installation of both the lab casework and the flooring in a way that would have saved the client time and money.

Who wouldn't want to consolidate, streamline, and simplify the design and build out of their space? It's just natural. It's total common sense, but we take it beyond theory and put it into practice. We're backed by the best group of manufacturers, and the best level of staff with the right experience. We are uniquely positioned to go from a typical vendor/supplier/subcontractor relationship to a true strategic partner, and those are miles apart in value and trust.

**TW: Where would you direct people if they want to learn more about elements and their work within life sciences?**

**DG:** Our website has some great content and resources for people wanting to learn more about how we can help companies within this market ([www.workplaceelements.com](http://www.workplaceelements.com))