

Strong Deal Flow Process, Diverse Workforce Drive Constructive Capital to Forefront of Lending Industry

By Carla Dempsey, Contributing Writer for *Originate Report*



The ever-evolving landscape of private lending is full of opportunity. However, the biggest factors in achieving great success in the industry emerge from a company's ability to navigate change and continuously challenge itself to improve.

"It's that kind of strategic approach that makes a difference," said Tess Siwa, Senior Vice President of Operations for Constructive Capital, a nationwide business lending company headquartered in Illinois.



"One of the things that differentiates us from other companies is that we don't have large egos in this business," said Siwa, who has worked in the industry for two decades and with Constructive Capital since 2019. "We value our clients and employees, which pushes us to be flexible and strive to improve when possible. That's what leads to a successful organization."

Constructive Capital, which offers loan programs involving rental property capital, short-term capital for "fix and flip" projects, and lines of credit, is built on a foundational focus of not only flexibility but speed and reliability as well.

Originate Report recently had the opportunity to speak with Siwa and Constructive Capital's Processing Manager, Kathleen Slack, about the company's effective deal flow process and dedication to inclusivity and diversity as main contributors in achieving success.

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Tess Siwa
Senior Vice President of Operations, Constructive Capital

Well-Oiled Machine

Communication is key in Constructive Capital's deal flow process. With a goal of underwriting files within 24 hours and closing loans within seven to ten days of submission from the broker, it is imperative that the process works well.

Packages, including credit appraisals, titles, and all other necessary documents, are submitted by brokers utilizing Constructive's comprehensive online portal. From there, files move through the system where they can be checked for completion and accuracy.

"It is a very fast-paced process, and the loans move very quickly," said Slack. "It is important that we work directly with our brokers throughout the entire process so that they are sending complete and full packages and handling any outstanding items needed quickly. There are many moving parts and a lot of hands working concurrently to move the loan swiftly for our partners."

Siwa said one of the things that Constructive does well is taking a proactive approach in guiding brokers even before submissions are made.

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Tess Siwa is the Senior Vice President of Operations for Constructive Capital. As Head of Operations, Tess has a tremendous breadth of responsibilities for both originations and investor portfolio management. She brings over 30 years of residential mortgage and business purpose lending experience, serving in various leadership capacities in sales, processing, underwriting, closing, vendor management, and asset management. Prior to joining Constructive Capital, Tess was in leadership at Jordan Capital/Finance of America Capital for five years, PHH Mortgage for three, and Morgan Stanley Private Bank for 18 years working with ultra-high net worth clients.



Kathleen Slack is the Processing Manager for Constructive Capital, overseeing the Loan Opening Department and Loan Processing teams. It is her goal to provide the strategic vision and direction for Operations to enhance performance and develop effective processing procedures for growth and stability within the Processing Department. Prior to joining the team at Constructive Capital, Kathleen was with Finance of America for four years where she was Lead Client Relationship Specialist and Client Relations Manager.

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“The key to making the deal flow process work so well is ensuring that our broker onboarding process is effective. The better understanding they have about the process and where they can identify potential challenges ahead of time, the more it will speed up the whole process and minimize the back-and-forth.”

In addition to ensuring that brokers take full advantage of all the options within Constructive’s portal, Siwa said the company makes it a priority

to overcommunicate with them. She noted that for some, the private lending space can be overwhelming due to the nuances and uniqueness of each situation. Siwa emphasized that Constructive’s service level agreements (SLAs) are in place to let borrowers and clients know what standards they can expect, but it is the company’s goal to go above and beyond those specifications.

“Our goal is to under promise and over deliver,” she said. “We want to be sure that at least 90 percent of the time, we are exceeding our SLAs.”

Slack said another element that has elevated the company’s deal flow process is the development of ongoing training materials for both internal employees and external partners. Recognizing the importance of continuously challenging current processes, Constructive Capital has made Six Sigma training available to its leadership. This training enables employees to identify areas where improvements, ranging from technology and communication to handling feedback, can benefit both the company and its brokers.

“We are constantly working against the clock. Our goal is to expedite the loan process efficiently to ensure timely closings,” stated Slack. “Achieving speed without compromising accuracy is paramount. Constructive has undertaken significant initiatives by offering comprehensive training courses and providing valuable information to both employees and brokers, enabling continuous improvement.”

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Kathleen Slack
Processing Manager, Constructive Capital

An Inclusive Culture

Fostering an inclusive and diverse workforce is another way Constructive Capital not only strengthens its foundation as a company but also drives the entire industry forward. For both Siwa and Slack, it has created a welcoming atmosphere that complements an industry where women are increasingly taking leadership roles.

“I appreciate the progress women have made in private lending. In the past, opportunities for women were scarce,” Siwa reflected. “Today, it’s a different story. The attendance at conferences, networking events, and overall engagement has significantly increased. Women no longer struggle for recognition; they have earned their place.” Siwa said the expanding space for women widens the talent pool throughout the industry, allowing companies to develop a more robust, innovative workforce.

Slack, who has worked in the private lending industry for 10 years and came on board with Constructive Capital in 2021, said she credits the “powerhouse” female leaders who paved the way for her in the industry.

“I’ve observed a notable change in the role of women within the private lending sector. In the conferences I attend, women’s voices are now taken more seriously, and their expertise is highly valued,” she remarked. “At Constructive Capital, I feel my voice is equally respected. They consistently support their female professionals every step of the way.”



Whatever It Takes

“Constructive Capital’s deal flow process and corporate structure have established the company’s reputation for ease and transparency,” Slack noted. “These attributes are crucial in building trust and momentum for moving forward.”

“I am very proud of what our company has done and will do,” she expressed. “We embrace evolution and actively seek new ideas. We value every perspective because it drives our continuous improvement.”

Siwa said like all companies, Constructive Capital has experienced challenges over the years.

“But one thing our company consistently demonstrates to clients and their staff is our unwavering commitment to delivering results,” she emphasized. “Our operational approach has fostered growth and sustainability. We understand the importance of continual evaluation to ensure we can uphold this standard for the long term.”

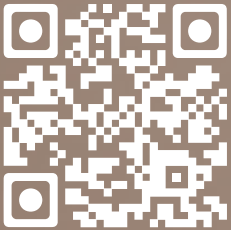


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