

## Thoughts I Would Like to Share by: Silvia Gutierrez



I am usually a very private and reserved person, but when someone mentions anything having to do with aviation, my heart fills with excitement and something inside me lights up. I love hearing about the experiences of others, especially when I hear from few women there are in the aviation industry that own their own business. I am happy to say that I see this changing and new opportunities forming every day.

I began my own company to support logistics of aircraft parts in the area because I was frustrated and disappointed that I could not find a company that understood the importance and gravity of handling logistics, documentation, packaging, and delivery times with care in the national and international market. I began the company the same year I finished my studies. At first it was just an idea, a way to face our logistics needs, because at that moment no company existed that handled only aircraft parts. Many people asked me why I was doing something so rare, it was a very niche market, but it was something that only someone who was entrenched in aviation could understand. I remember being shocked when I would receive an aircraft part that was improperly packaged because someone wanted to save money.

I was already very involved in the market when I started a joint venture between TIC Logistics and an MRO Heavy Maintenance Facility. We faced a very difficult situation in figuring out how to handle C Checks, we would have all the parts ready that would be needed as soon as the plane arrived, in order to be able to complete the repair work in the most efficient way possible so that the plane could return to operation as quickly as possible. Achieving this meant obtaining many new certifications such as FBO, Specialized Airport Services to ramp, Land Support, Additional Customs Broker to Cargo Agent. While we already counted with IATA, CCSF - Screening Facility, DoD Military License, we needed to train our personnel in specific procedures, and obtain many other certifications that now allow us to have control of the parts and tools from origin to destination. Although I was happy with what we were achieving, I wanted independence and I wanted to develop an operation where I could oversee and craft every detail. It has always been a dream of mine, and a secret wish in my heart, to own my own repair station. I wanted to improve upon what I had learned in the joint venture and use technology to enhance service, shorten delivery times, and tighten quality control. Thanks to an incredible team of passionate and hardworking personnel, I was able to create TIC Aerospace. There are very few women in aviation and even less owning an MRO, but I trust that we can grow and take stock. I will forever remember, with appreciation and gratitude, the day in which I received the FAA Certificate and my PMI said, "Ms. Gutierrez, from what I know, you are one of the very few women owner of an MRO in Florida, you must be proud."

Let me share with all of you that I am very proud, because it has not been an easy path. It takes sacrifices, dedication, and passion to succeed in aviation, and you must always be working to improve and distinguish your operation. Owning your own business, especially in the aviation industry, is challenging. You have a lot of responsibility on your shoulders – you are responsible for your employees, you are responsible for quality control and must follow strict legal guidelines and regulations, and you are responsible for the customers and the confidence they put in you. But I am thankful for the customers that gave me an opportunity and opened a door for me when I first began. I have an amazing team, all of whom have had long and prominent careers in aviation and are passionate about what they do. And my faith is my strength; I do everything by faith and my heart is always grateful to God.

I want to encourage women who are interested in aviation to be brave and become involved.

Silvia Gutierrez - Owner, President & CEO - TIC AEROSPACE, INC.