THE ZWEIG LETTER

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HR/FINANCE SUPPLEMENT Pages 3-5, 9

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Getting the ball across the goal line

There are probably many reasons why people have trouble completing tasks; here are some ways to solve the problem.

> "I don't know about you, but I have little use for those who never complete what they start. I don't have the time to pester them too many times. If I have to, I might just decide they aren't worth fooling around with, and go to someone else!"

Mark Zweig

EDITORIAL

It seems to me, a common problem we all encounter these days – either with ourselves or people who work with us – is the ability to actually **FINISH** something. It's a widespread issue, and one that's rampant in the AEC business.

Why is this? Is everyone too busy to finish the last 2 percent of work? Do people just get bored and move on to the next thing? Or, is it just that it seems like the other guy's job?

Whatever the cause, here are my thoughts on how to solve this problem:

1) **You need to be sure YOU aren't the offender.** It is one thing when someone else doesn't finish up like they should. But it's another when you, as the leader, don't. It sets a horrible example. And it's the same story you have heard many times: Lead by example.

2) **Make it the PM's job.** The PM is ultimately the one who HAS to finish. When he or she doesn't, it could be that the PM hasn't been functioning like a PM because the PIC is "too strong." He or she might expect the PIC to wrap up all the details that need taking care of because the PIC has been doing more than they should have all along. Then, when it comes to final details, the PIC might not think that it is his or her job. Check into this.

3) **Lay out clear expectations.** While I have never been a big fan of job descriptions, I do think there should be some clearly understood roles for everyone in the firm,

See MARK ZWEIG, page 2

MORE COLUMNS

TRENDLINES

Charging for reimbursables

Among respondents to Zweig Group's *2015 Fee & Billing Survey of Architectural, Engineering, Planning & Environmental Consulting Firms*, **56 percent** of respondents reported charging for reimbursable expenses at cost. Another **30 percent** said they included the cost in the project fee, while only **15 percent** marked up the costs.

— Vivian Cummings, research analyst assistant.

FIRM INDEX

Employee satisfaction Page 5

SPOTLIGHT ON:

TY Lin's Bridge of the People Pages 6,7

ON THE MOVE

STRONGWELL CHAIRMAN APPOINTED TO UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES Businessman, philanthropist, and University of Tennessee graduate **John Tickle** has been appointed by Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam to serve on the UT Board of Trustees.

Tickle is chairman of **Strongwell Corporation** (Knoxville, TN) and a 1965 graduate of UT Knoxville with a bachelor's degree in industrial engineering. In 2013, the 110,000-square-foot Tickle Engineering Building, funded in part by a gift from Tickle and his wife, Ann, was dedicated on the Knoxville campus.

In 2010, the couple were named Philanthropists of the Year by the UT Development Council in recognition of their support for the $1 billion Campaign for Tennessee through a gift that enabled a 32,000-square-foot expansion, the John and Ann Tickle Small Animal Hospital, within the UT College of Veterinary Medicine. (Ann received a bachelor's degree in education from UT Knoxville.)

"John and Ann are long-time friends and supporters of the University of Tennessee, and as alumni, they both have a great affinity for UT and care deeply about its mission," UT President Joe DiPietro said. "Because of that, and the proven leadership John will bring to his service on the board of trustees, his appointment is great news and I look very much forward to working with him."

Tickle, a resident of Bristol, fills the unexpired term of former UT trustee and board vice chairman Brian Ferguson, who resigned in April upon moving out of state. Tickle's current appointment is through 2017. Tickle will serve on the UT board's finance and administration committee; and on the research, outreach, and economic development committee.

Tickle was president of Morrison Molded Fiber Glass Company in Bristol before he eventually purchased the company and renamed it Strongwell Corporation in 1997. Today, Strongwell is a worldwide operation, headquartered in Bristol.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

particularly when it comes to projects. Who does what should not be a mystery. And what "finished" means must be defined. Not everyone has the same standards. Make yours high and let them be known to all.

4) **Celebrate endings!** We're done! Let's make a big deal out of it! Let's be happy! Too often the end of the project comes along and the only reward is another one just like it. The lack of finality and closure is alienating and hampers job satisfaction. Why cheat your people from this satisfaction? Make sure they finish, and then celebrate it!

5) **Counsel offenders.** It's ok to be patient with people, but those who routinely never complete tasks need to know you recognize this behavior pattern and that it is not acceptable. If you never confront it, then how can you blame someone for acting this way?

I don't know about you, but I have little use for those who never complete what they start. I don't have the time to pester them too many times. If I have to, I might decide they aren't worth fooling around with, and go to someone else!

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HR A SUPPLEMENT OF THE ZWEIG LETTER

OPINION

Relationship building: A primer to success

It's not uncommon for relationships to lead to job offers – that's what happened for Mal Goode! So, take every opportunity to expand your network.

Randy Wilburn

RECRUITING NOTES

Jackie Robinson was an iconic sports figure who broke Major League Baseball's color barrier. Robinson was also a natural connector who developed relationships with African-American journalists across the country. One of these journalists was Mal Goode, who wrote for the *Pittsburgh Courier*. The *Courier* was a black-owned newspaper in Pittsburgh with a large circulation and national following. Mal would often cover Jackie when the Brooklyn Dodgers came to town to play the Pittsburgh Pirates. They developed a fast friendship, and Jackie would even have dinner with Mal and his family when in town.

Over the years, their friendship grew, and after Jackie had retired from baseball they remained in touch. In spring 1962, Jackie was in New York visiting with Jim Haggerty, the head of the ABC News network. Jim had a problem because he needed to find and recruit the network's first black newscaster. Actually, the first on any network – CBS, NBC, or ABC. Jim asked Jackie if he knew of anyone. One of the first people that came to Jackie's mind was his friend in Pittsburgh, Mal Goode. Jim asked Jackie to call Mal and get him to New York as soon as possible. Mal took a train to New York from Pittsburgh and interviewed with Jim and the rest of the news team. Goode wrote several "off the cuff" stories for the interview and even did a few test stand-ups to show his ability to deliver the news quickly and accurately.

There were over 40 people interviewed for this position, but ABC went with Mal Goode, who was 54 years old. Jim would later tell Mal that one of the reasons that he got the job was his relationship with Jackie.

Like Jackie, Mal became a trailblazer of sorts. There's a little serendipity involved when the first African-American ballplayer in Major League Baseball has a hand in helping the first African-American journalist join the major leagues of television news broadcasting.

Goode would go on to have a 10-year career with ABC, where he covered major historical events like the Cuban Missile Crisis; the March on Washington; the assassinations of Malcolm X, Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King Jr.; and several major Civil Rights stories, including the March to Selma. Goode was also a mentor to some of ABC's biggest names, including Max Robinson, Ted Koppel, and Peter Jennings.

> "The design industry offers plenty of opportunities for hiring managers to meet great candidates and create a dialogue with them … Some relationships will take longer than others to develop, but, if you don't make the initial effort, the relationship will never happen."

You might be wondering: What does this have to do with the design industry and recruitment and retention? Though, the story is a good yarn, and one that few people know about, it's more important that it highlights the importance of relationships. In the frenetic and fast-moving environment that we live in today, it is difficult to get to know the people that you want to work with. Relationships are one of the easiest ways to build a pipeline of potential candidates that could ultimately prove worthy of hiring.

I recently did a presentation on recruitment and retention where I discussed the power of relationships and how they can lead to so many different opportunities.

In the A/E business, we understand this phenomenon all too well. There is always a client out there that you've been champing at the bit to work with,

See RANDY WILBURN, page 4

RANDY WILBURN, from page 3

and you will do whatever it takes to get in front of them. Most of the time, you look for an introduction to this potential client or try to figure out a way to position your firm so that they notice you through some marketing effort or via a mutual friend, colleague, or associate. A lot of times, your next big project is actually disguised in a relationship that you already have or are attempting to develop.

When it comes to recruiting talent for your firm, there is quite a bit that you can do to establish relationships with people that you might one day want to hire. I like to think of it as priming the pump. For those of you that have lived on a farm for any period of time, you know the effort that it takes to get nice cold well water to come to the surface. The first several pumps will yield little to any results, but then water will start to flow. Building relationships with intentionality works in much the same way. You have to get out there and meet and interact with as many people as you can. Some efforts will appear wasted at first, but the idea is to make a connection, learn about people, and try to establish a connection.

The design industry offers plenty of opportunities for hiring managers to meet great candidates and create a dialogue with them. You have project meetings with many firms in attendance, business mixers, association gatherings, and the random bumping into someone that you know from another firm. These are all opportunities to establish relationships. I look at every meeting or encounter as a chance to connect with someone new. Some relationships will take longer than others to develop, but, if you don't make the initial effort, the relationship will never happen.

Here are four ways to build relationships and establish connections with people that you meet in the A/E industry.

- **Find a common ground.** When you are speaking to someone in the industry, find out what similar projects he/she is working on. It's not that you have to share trade secrets, but in our industry, we usually have an idea of what's going on. It's always good to check someone's temperature this way, and it opens up an opportunity for you to compare notes with someone that might have a different perspective on things.
- **Discuss the future of the industry.** Things are rapidly changing. I took a hiatus from the design industry to do small-business consulting on my own, and when I got back, there were a lot of changes with the way firms operated, the technology used, and the way recruiting is done. Nothing stays the same, and I find it interesting to learn where people think the market is going in the next five to 10-plus years. This feedback can be insightful and offers a window into how someone thinks about their profession and the opportunities that exist within it.

  For instance, if you hear a lot of hemming and hawing about the market and people wishing things were like "the old days," take note of that. When our team recruits a potential candidate and they have a lot of negative things to say about the industry and their job, we make note of that. When possible, the glass should be "half full"!
- **Find out what they are working on that excites them.** When talking with someone in the design industry, I enjoy finding out what they like and don't like about their assignments and what's been their biggest takeaway so far. Most of the time, people love talking about what they are doing. Every now and then someone might be working on something confidential and thus cannot elaborate, but most of the time this is not the case.
- **Ask them about something other than work.** I like to talk sports, pop culture, or other current events with a potential candidate to learn more about them and keep the conversation light. Talking about work all day can – and does – get boring. See if you can find some common interests to discuss further. You might find out you both love car racing or fly fishing, or cycling, or the Pittsburgh Steelers. The only topics of discussion to leave off the table are politics, race, religion, and Donald Trump (kidding!). Those are rabbit holes you don't want to go down, and if you do, sometimes you never recover.

Recruiting and establishing relationship involves a lot of hard work. If you work in a specific area of the A/E industry and you run into the same people all the time, it is incumbent on you to do what you can to establish a regular dialogue where possible. Like Jim Haggerty at ABC News, you never know where your next talent referral will come from.

I'm always happy to answer questions about recruiting, retention, and relationship building! Send me an email if you have anything I can offer insights on.

RANDY WILBURN is Zweig Group's director of executive search. Contact him at rwilburn@zweiggroup.com.

DIGITAL RELATIONSHIP RECRUITING …

The Internet is the perfect medium for relationship recruiting. Its technology provides a mass one-to-one communications capability that enables you to reach out and touch hundreds of individuals with a message that is custom tailored to them.

To be most effective, you should use the Internet to build relationships with three groups:

Your employees. If your organization is like most, it includes an employee-referral program in its recruiting efforts. The Internet can help you to extend and enrich this program, expanding its contribution to candidate development. Use email to promote the referral program, announce awards, and thank participants.

Candidates for your current openings. Use email to respond to every application you receive (including those from individuals not qualified for a current opening, as they might be a legitimate candidate for future vacancy, keep active candidates informed of their status, direct candidates to information on your website or to online articles in publications, and continue the selling process by sending them a candidate newsletter or other communication about the firm.

Those who are not yet candidates. Use the Internet to expand your networking. Join and participate in virtual communities, offering your expertise as a resource for their members.

Transform the employment area of your website into a a rich trove of job search and career management information that is open to and designed to serve everyone. Wherever possible, capture individual information so that you can continue to interact with visitors after they've left the site.

Source: JobHuntersBible.com

Are your employees satisfied?

Obtaining third-party assistance and issuing surveys are among the ways firms measure satisfaction, but information is nothing without action.

By LIISA ANDREASSEN
Correspondent

Companies with highly engaged employees have 3.9 times the earnings per share growth rate compared to organizations with low engagement scores, according to Gallup. This link between company performance and employees' potential will help drive the performance of your employees and business. How are you making sure your employees are satisfied?

ASK FOR THIRD-PARTY INPUT. Tim Anderson, HR manager at **KJWW Engineering Consultants** (Rock Island, IL), a 500-person global engineering design consulting firm, says that last year they hired an outside consulting firm to conduct an employment engagement and satisfaction survey.

"They presented the results to us along with national and regional norms. Although our overall results were very positive, we did identify areas in which we could improve," he says. "From there, we established a task force in each office to brainstorm ideas. For several months now we have been working on initiatives to make KJWW an even better place at which to work. We will follow up with another survey next year to judge the results of our actions."

In addition to these surveys, the president of KJWW meets with all employees in small group settings. At these "roundtables," he makes a presentation on the state of the company, where they are headed, and asks for feedback.

"It generates a long list of items on which to work," Anderson says.

Liz Uzzo, vice president of HR with **H2M architects + engineers** (Melville, NY), a 290-person full-service consulting and design firm, also turned to an outside vendor to conduct an employee engagement survey in 2014. The survey had 95 percent participation and the company now has a good baseline from which to approach issues that were identified.

"We shared the data with executives and then down the line from which we formed working committees [volunteers] from each division to tackle issues identified," she says. "Communication is key to the success of the survey. We are about a year

See SATISFACTION, page 8

SPOTLIGHT ON: Offic

Tilikum Crossing; Bridge of the People

Portland's newest bridge, the largest transit bridge in the U.S., uses dramatic design to connect

By Liisa Andreassen
Correspondent

David Goodyear, Sr. Vice President T.Y. Lin International

At 1,720 feet long, with a main span of 780 feet, the new Tilikum Crossing, touted as the "Bridge of the People," is the largest transit bridge in the U.S. and **T.Y. Lin International** (San Francisco, CA), a more than 2,500-person full-service infrastructure consulting firm, served as the engineer of record.

A transit-only, cable-stayed bridge spanning the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon – the nation's "City of Bridges" – will serve light rail, streetcars, buses, bicycles, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles, but no private or commercial vehicles.

The concrete bridge is a hybrid between a traditional cable-stayed layout and an extradosed bridge, with two towers and two landside piers. Two 14-foot-wide bicycle-pedestrian paths flank each side of the bridge, with pedestrian belvederes at the towers.

The bridge links the city's South Waterfront, home to an Oregon Health & Science University campus and the Portland Aerial Tram, to the up and coming Central Eastside, known for visitor favorites like the Eastbank Esplanade and Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, plus some of the city's best dining and nightlife.

"We are tremendously pleased that T.Y. Lin International had the privilege of designing such an important, visually-iconic bridge for Portland, 'The City of Bridges.'"

David Goodyear, senior vice president and chief bridge engineer for Tilikum Crossing, says that this "design-build project is the jewel of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project, a 7.3-mile transit link from downtown Portland to Park Avenue in Clackamas County."

Goodyear is a pioneer in cable-stayed bridge design and construction. He has more than 36 years of experience in the design and construction of concrete, steel, segmental, and cable-stayed bridges.

He has led the design for major bridge engineering projects ranging from cable-stayed bridges to significant arch structures and explains that TYLI's scope of work consisted of the design engineering of the elevated structure, along with roadway improvements at the east side touchdown, two 160-foot-tall pylons, drilled shaft foundations, direct-fixation track, and systems integration.

e design:

a forward-thinking urban transit system.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS: The project had an aggressive design-build schedule that called for work to begin in the river only five months after notice-to-proceed.

Because the bridge is located in an area of relatively high seismicity, TYLI engineers were charged with ensuring that the bridge design successfully met special transit and seismic design requirements.

The TYLI team implemented important value engineering concepts, including optimizing the foundation system by reducing the number and size of drilled shafts and providing an alternative structural basis for mitigation of liquefaction that removed the need to stabilize the soil on the west approach.

This is the first new crossing of the Willamette River since the Freemont Bridge was constructed in 1973 and the new extension of the light rail transit system is expected to serve more than 25,500 weekday riders by 2030.

IT'S A NATURAL BEAUTY. Even from afar the bridge stands out. LEDs light up the entire bridge, changing color and pattern based on how fast, deep, and cold the river is flowing, making the crossing a people-pleaser from any angle.

There are nods to nature, too, with osprey nesting poles at each end and a "sonic dish" art installation on the east bank that amplifies the sounds of the river.

IT'S ALL IN A NAME. Tilikum is a word that comes from Chinook Wawa, an international language used by the first Oregonians, and later spoken by explorers, fur traders, settlers, and the first few generations of Portlanders. Chinook Wawa is still spoken today. Tilikum means people, tribe, and relatives and has come to mean friendly people and friends.

The word itself symbolizes coming together. It conveys connections, in not only the relationships between people, but in the connections that will be made as they ride, walk, run, and cycle across this beautiful new bridge.

VALUE ENGINEERING. To reduce project costs, TYLI engineers also introduced numerous value engineering concepts, including optimizing the foundation system by reducing the number and size of drilled shafts and providing an alternative structural solution that removed the need to stabilize soil on the west approach.

"We are tremendously pleased that T.Y. Lin International had the privilege of designing such an important, visually-iconic bridge for Portland, 'The City of Bridges,'" Goodyear says.

SATISFACTION, from page 5

into this and will conduct another survey next spring to get a measurement."

Uzzo says that they have corporate reps from each group who meet monthly to report on successes and progress.

H2M also conducted "stay interviews" with about 20 percent of the organization. They looked for top performers and asked them what they were doing right and wrong. These employees met with individuals from the executive team and members of the HR staff. Feedback was then shared with the entire management team.

SURVEYS DELIVER RESULTS. Uzzo says that both of these initiatives led to:

- A new mid-level management training program
- A revamped mentorship and enhanced onboarding program
- More efforts to provide better visibility between division/departments
- Education to staff about salary structure and career path
- Additional transparency about the benefits program
- The development of an advisory team of volunteers from out on the floor to communicate with their divisions
- Enhanced communication on a corporate level
- Regular meetings conducted in a small group setting
- More celebrations for things like promos, project wins, and happenings
- A realigned HR to better meet the needs of managers and staff, and much more

ENGAGEMENT VS. SATISFACTION. Mark Morgenfruh, vice president of HR at **Larson Design Group** (Williamsport, PA) – a 311-person engineering, architecture, and surveying firm – says that for them, the focus is really on employee engagement rather than satisfaction.

"Realizing that it's just not possible to be all things for all employees, we try to be open and transparent about the 'why' behind our decisions so that employees gain an understanding that we run our firm under the premise of the greatest good for the greatest number of people," he says.

It's this approach that helps employees to understand when a business decision, policy, or practice isn't optimal for certain situations. While satisfaction is important, it is just one component of employee engagement.

"We believe employees can only support the things they can understand," he says.

Larson Design Group, like KJWW and H2M also uses a third-party vendor to conduct anonymous engagement surveys every 18 months. After the survey is administered online, the vendor compiles and analyzes the results across four main areas:

- Organizational engagement
- Job/career engagement
- Co-worker engagement
- Leader engagement

Other sections of the survey also ask about overall satisfaction, change in satisfaction over time, and the employee net promoter score. Trends are reported back from the vendor first to the executive team during an in-person session. Then all other managers and leaders in the company get a separate in-person session. Both of these meetings include company, division, department, and individual supervisor reports.

"Using those reports, each manager conducts a staff meeting with his/her respondents, digging into the results to gain further clarity about the highlights and areas where improvement can occur," Morgenfruh says. "If a manager has less than three respondents, s/he will not get an individual report, but will use the departmental report instead. From these focus groups the manager creates one or two action plans."

TAKE ACTION. Action plans can focus on either how to take better advantage of a strength or how to make improvements.

"We like to see one of each," he says.

The plans are reviewed by each divisional vice president, and by the executive staff, to ensure they are not only meaningful, but to look for commonalities where they can implement positive change on a larger scale for efficiency. This year, they settled on five corporate-level action plans that were adopted across the entire company. HR is responsible for the execution of some, but also tracking and the effective implementation for all action plans.

"This has been a very effective and well-received approach to measuring and improving the engagement of our people," he says.

7 WAYS TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

Gretchen Rubin, author of *The Happiness Project*, identifies seven areas where employers can improve happiness in the workplace.

Give employees more control. Give employees more control over their schedules, environment, and/or work habits.

Ease commuting stress. For example, stagger work times to avoid heavy traffic.

Stop wasting time. Tight deadlines are a source of stress for employees. Ease this stress by doing things like making meetings shorter and more efficient.

Encourage social connections. Consider an office arrangement that fosters communication. Arrange workstations so employees can see each other and talk.

Promote good health. "Corporations pay a heavy cost for stress-related illnesses, such as hypertension, gastrointestinal problems, and substance abuse," says Rubin.

Create an atomosphere of growth. Provide training, acknowledge benchmarks, and celebrate accomplishments. Encourage employees to take risks and learn new skills.

Break up routines. Look for small ways to surprise employees.

OPINION

PM/FM: The heart of the matter

Here are 10 lessons you need to learn to make the relationship between your firm's project managers and financial managers the best it can be.

Ted Maziejka

FINANCIAL FITNESS

Firms that place a high degree of value on both project management and financial management, and more importantly, the synergy between the two, see remarkable results when these two are in sync.

Most importantly it is the atmosphere that senior leadership fosters when it comes to leadership; that atmosphere allows amazing things to occur! We see and hear many leadership practices, but in *The Truth About Leadership*, James Kouzes and Barry Posner provide 10 essential lessons that leaders of all types – including project managers, technical managers, design managers, financial managers, and senior leadership – must learn to excel and achieve more for the organizations they steer.

The relationship between project managers and financial managers will be explored in 10 lessons:

1) **Individuals make a difference.** With a clear understanding of the goals that the team needs to achieve, the financial management team can be a huge resource supporting and aiding the design team. The differences in expertise and experience can bring innovation to how the team can work. The financial management or design team might have younger members, but keep in mind that there is no age to leadership.

2) **Credibility is the foundation of leadership.** Honesty, competency, and inspiration create "source credibility," according Kouzes and Posner. With financial management of project information, project managers want to rely on the financial management staff for accurate information. Conversely, the financial management staff rely on the project managers to set the example for the design team when it comes to following the process and procedures of the firm. In fact, senior leadership has to set the example for all staff. Kouzes and Posner's first law of leadership says, "If you don't believe in the messenger, you won't believe the message."

   So, actions and words play a key role in the establishment of practice between financial management and project management, or as Kouzes and Posner's second law of leadership states: "Do what you say you will do."

3) **Values drive commitment.** Values of the firm, the moral compass of the financial management and the project managers will create a commitment to achieving what is the best and highest purpose for the good of the project and the good of the firm.

4) **Focusing on the future sets leaders apart.** Most of the work between financial managers and project managers is a review of performance to the budget and where we have been. Inspiration will come from a greater look at the predictability metrics, a forward look into the future of the estimate to complete the project, a resource planned backlog of work, a resource planned pipeline of opportunity, and a predictive approach to cash management. Ultimately, a strategic look to the goals of the project and the efforts of both the project manager and financial manager will set the project and the firm apart.

> "Great leaders continually learn and practice the craft of leadership. Active participation, management by walking around, the desire to excel and devote time to continuous learning, feedback from others, and observing are all characteristics of continual learning."

5) **Leaders cannot do it alone.** Team building, adherence to the concepts of goals, roles and responsibilities, process, and interpersonal skills, the team's input on the project to create innovative ways to execute the project, the financial management assisting the PM and team – all these are recognized by effective leaders.

6) **Trust rules.** A simple concept but not easy. Without trust and people taking the risk of opening up to one another, great things will not be accomplished by the project team. Without the following as

See TED MAZIEJKA, page 10

BUSINESS NEWS

FRALEY AEC SOLUTIONS UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE **Fraley AEC Solutions LLC** (Morgantown, PA), a marketing communications firm serving the architecture, engineering, and construction marketplace, has launched a redesigned website at fraleysolutions.com.

The intent of the website is not only to better display the firm's offerings, but also to better organize and display the vehicles Fraley uses to educate construction and design firms on effective marketing practices. In addition to The AEC Straight Talker Blog, they include the AEC Marketing InSITE Newsletter, guest articles, and an A/E Branding eBook.

"We constantly stress to our clients that an effective web presence is among their most valuable pieces on online marketing real estate," said Founder Brian Fraley. "Although we're a young firm, it was time to lead by example. More importantly, we churn out a great deal of educational material for the construction and design industry and this site will allow us to better organize and distribute that material."

TRIGON ASSOCIATES WINS $600 MILLION USAID GLOBAL ARCHITECT-ENGINEER SERVICES CONTRACT **Trigon Associates LLC** (New Orleans, LA), a woman-owned full-service engineering, consulting, and management services firm, was recently awarded a global indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract for architect-engineer services with the U.S. Agency for International Development. This five-year, multiple-award contract has a maximum value of $600 million. It is administered by USAID, a U.S. foreign assistance program providing economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 80 countries worldwide.

Trigon will provide A/E services including design, construction supervision, and related services to develop important infrastructure in developing countries. Trigon will support USAID in providing engineering design, construction supervision, and related support on both short and long-term services for infrastructure projects involving water resources, water supply, wastewater, utilities, environmental, transportation, and facilities.

"Trigon is honored to have been selected by USAID for this important contract," said Lisa Cookmeyer, Trigon's CEO. "We look forward to supporting USAID in its goal to provide institutional and infrastructure development via this effort, building upon our successful projects with USAID over the past five years."

RCM TECHNOLOGIES, INC. AND BRUCE POWER FORGE A 6-YEAR MASTER SERVICE AGREEMENT **RCM Technologies Inc.**, a provider of engineering, business, and technology solutions, has announced forging a six-year master service agreement with Bruce Power. The agreement will allow RCMT to continue to support Bruce Power's ongoing divisional needs and future capital projects and asset life extension programs.

RCM Technologies Canada Corp. (Pickering, ON), a wholly owned subsidiary of RCMT, will be responsible for the execution of major design and engineering contracts during the term of this agreement. With this agreement in place, RCMT will be able to secure and expand its seasoned engineering work force and continue to provide employment opportunities in Ontario.

Rocco Campanelli, chairman and CEO of RCM, said, "We are extremely pleased to continue supporting Bruce Power on this major effort. We have been a partner with Bruce Power since its inception in 2001, working on numerous capital and O&M projects. RCMT looks forward to contributing its extensive expertise and capabilities on design engineering, mechanical, electrical, and I&C design throughout this engagement."

"We view RCMT as a key vendor and value the quality of work and the partnership that has been forged over the years," said Duncan Hawthorne, Bruce Power's president and CEO.

TED MAZIEJKA, from page 9

guiding principles to trust, trustworthiness will not be fostered:

- Predictable and consistent behavior
- Clear communication
- Promises are treated seriously
- Forthright and candid behavior

What kind of team, studio, office, or enterprise is being fostered in your firm?

7) **Challenge is the crucible to greatness.** The dynamics of all the stakeholders involved in a project can lead to challenges that seem sometimes insurmountable. By stepping up to the challenges as a team, by seeking the options to the adversity presented, and most importantly, by fostering an attitude that challenges are just opportunities with a different look. The financial and project management teams can create more success and look out for each other's backs. Having grit, perseverance, and passion to achieve are all qualities for successful leadership.

8) **Lead by example.** Actions speak louder than words, and effective leaders are not afraid to demonstrate and go into the fray. The most important aspect of this is a consistent approach by each of the leaders when faced with stepping up to challenges.

The project manager that supports the design team in the face of challenges from the client, the financial manager that works with the client to insure that all material required to pay the firm's invoice is clearly communicated in a timely manner to the client. The principal on the project supports the deign team's approach to the client.

The admission of a mistake by a leader is also a critical act of being responsible, and a positive approach allows all team members to make and acknowledge their own mistakes.

9) **The best leaders are the best learners.** Great leaders continually learn and practice the craft of leadership. Active participation, management by walking around, the desire to excel and devote time to continuous learning, feedback from others, and observing are all characteristics of continual learning. The synergy that can be created between financial management and project management staff in and of itself creates learning opportunities on a regular basis.

10) **Leadership requires heart.** Care and concern are the foundations of great leaders. When you make the neads of those whom you are surrounded by and attending to a priority, the team feels more confident and is elevated to a higher level. This elevation fosters a better environment that fosters greater performance. Positive leadership generates positive emotion, and, in that space, the teams can create amazing and extraordinary results.

The heart of the matter is that heart-based leadership, care, concern, and genuine interest will foster greater synergies with the firm's team members.

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OPINION

Planning for and managing crisis

Does your firm have a crisis plan? Here are some tips to create one so you can be ready if disaster strikes.

Mike Herlihy

GUEST SPEAKER

At some point, any A/E firm might face a serious crisis. The causes can range from an injury or death to environmental contamination, construction delays, or cost overruns caused by an actual or alleged design error. Additional risks arise from disputes with contractors or project owners, legacy exposures from a merger or acquisition, and even hacking incidents.

Besides potentially substantial legal and business costs, a crisis that isn't managed effectively can leave firms with enduring reputational damage that can negatively impact new business and hiring efforts. Today, sound risk management for design firms should include crisis planning; if an event occurs, the firm is in position to manage the situation, recover quickly, and limit potential reputation damage.

IDENTIFY POSSIBLE RISKS AND CREATE A CRISIS PLAN. Effective crisis planning starts with understanding your potential exposures and developing a plan to address them. Key components of a plan might include:

- Listing all potential exposures that could lead to a crisis (e.g., death of a principal, collapse or other accident at a project site, significant cost-overrun).
- Establishing a crisis team with a designated team leader and members of your firm's leadership, risk management, human resources, legal, communications, finance, facilities/real estate, and any external providers for these functions. Include your outside legal counsel, insurance advisor, and insurance company contacts.
- Developing a communications strategy for contacting and responding to inquiries from employees, current and former clients, the news media, regulatory and legal authorities, and other key audiences. Prepare call trees with multiple contact details for all appropriate individuals. Consider including contact information for emergency management, OSHA officials, law enforcement, and first responders at current and former jobsites.
- Sharing the plan with all managers and professionals who will be impacted or called upon to act in the event of a crisis. Direct all questions and other communication to the team leader.

EARLY AND EFFECTIVE CRISIS RESPONSE IS KEY. The initial hours following an incident are extremely important for obtaining needed assistance, gathering information, and checking your strategy. Here are some keys to manage a crisis:

> "Today, sound risk management for design firms should include crisis planning, so, if an event occurs, the firm is in position to manage the situation, recover quickly, and limit potential reputation damage."

- Notify the team leader immediately and assemble your crisis team.
- Share information within your crisis team so every member is aware of any developments.
- Work with your legal and communications team members to implement your communications strategy, including timing and content of any messaging for employees, current and former clients, public officials, and the news media.
- Advise employees not to speak to the media or others outside the firm and to refer inquiries to the crisis team for response.
- Although crisis communications plans are developed in advance, messages and activities may have to be refined given the specifics of an event. Remain flexible.
- Depending on the circumstances, you may need to cooperate with emergency officials, law enforcement, first responders, and OSHA. (Identify these key contacts in advance.)

DON'T IGNORE PROJECT-RELATED RISK. Much of the risk for design professionals arises from work conducted on specific projects. In addressing this risk, A/E firms might reinforce their process controls, including:

- Strengthening design services quality assurance and quality control; also, be sure to choose qualified consultants, particularly for structural, HVAC, and building envelope.

See MIKE HERLIHY, page 12

BUSINESS NEWS

6 THORNTON TOMASETTI PROFESSIONALS PRESENT AT THE CTBUH 2015 **Thornton Tomasetti**'s Dennis Poon, Eli Gottlieb, John Peronto, Jianhai Liang, Gunnar Hubbard, and Edward Peck presented at the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat 2015 International Conference in Manhattan on October 26-30.

- Poon has experience in the structural engineering of a variety of building types, particularly supertall structures. He is skilled in the application of state-of-the-art engineering technologies for building analysis, design, and construction. As part of the Technological Advances in Asia session, Poon discussed the Chengdu Dongcun Greenland Tower. His presentation, "Designing a Non-coplanar Exoskeleton Supertall Tower that Transforms the Skyline of Chengdu," looked at how the 468-meter, mixed-use main tower adopts a non-coplanar 3-D exoskeleton system, which integrates columns that zigzag along the height of the tower and steel mega-braces on the edges of the surface facets.
- In 2009, Gottlieb became the youngest-ever principal at the firm. His experience includes structural analysis, design and review of commercial buildings, hotels and sports facilities. Gottlieb participated in the panel discussion "Creating Real Estate from Thin Air: Hudson Yards" along with George Leventis and Marc Gallagher of **Langan International**, Anthony Mocelli of **KPF**, and **The Related Companies**' Michael Samuelian.
- Peronto is a vice president in the firm's Chicago office. He has designed commercial, residential, cultural, and aviation facilities. His structural design expertise ranges from long-span structures to mega-tall buildings. Peronto talked about the newest addition to the Los Angeles skyline in the session "Wilshire Grand Center: Practical Application of Performance Based Design."
- Liang is an associate with the firm's New York Pacific Rim team. He has experience in the structural analysis and design of supertall, mixed-use, industrial, institutional, and hospitality projects. Liang gave the presentation "Skyscraper Structure System Comparison in High Seismic Zone in China."
- Hubbard has more than 25 years of experience as a licensed architect and a sustainability consultant, educator, and advocate. Hubbard discussed "FORMulating High Performance Towers: Envelope Shape, Tectonics and Functionality," as part of the Tall Building Development Trends Host Room, where presentations focused on trends in sustainable design and technologies.
- Peck is a vice president and leader of the firm's Midwest U.S. Façade Engineering practice. He collaborates with design teams to integrate innovative and sustainable technologies into high-performance buildings. Peck presented on the "Myths and Tales of Transparency: Bringing Clarity to Emergent Façade Technology" panel.

MIKE HERLIHY, from page 11

- Establishing a pre-project planning checklist with an agreed-upon schedule for submittals and a change-order approval process. Maintain a complete list of project contacts, including key contractor personnel.
- Requiring written documentation of all site observations, submittal reviews, payment application reviews, and consultant's Certificate of Substantial Completion. Detailed and complete documentation are essential should a problem arise.
- Implementing review procedures for documents and deliverables, including appropriate peer review, and consider establishing a constructability review process.

CONSTRUCTION TEAM RELATIONSHIPS MATTER. You can also avoid potential problems by strengthening your firm's relationship management with contractors and other members of the construction team. In particular, focus on the following:

- Respond in a timely manner to RFIs, shop drawings, and any other submittals;
- Make sure contractors stick to schedule and report when they don't;
- Avoid assisting with construction ways, means, methods, or additional services if contractor falls behind.

DEVELOP AN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM. Firms also should have procedures to alert management of potential problems and warning signs, including:

- Contractor concerns that drawings lack necessary detail, are delaying the project, or driving up costs;
- An unusually high number of RFIs;
- Escalating project costs;
- Concerns by the owner about the project's progress, look, or quality;
- Contractor alleging delays in review and approval of submittals;
- Any injuries occurring on the site;
- Refusal to pay invoices;
- Disputes between owner and contractor.

RECOVERY AND INSURANCE. Whenever significant problems arise, your team leader should contact those members of your crisis management team who can assist. This likely will include your insurance broker who can then engage your insurer to help you gain the full benefits of insurance. For instance, some insurers provide "pre-claim" assistance at no additional cost.

In particular, the professional liability insurance policy is there to protect the architect or engineer and help defend your reputation. Design firms should also be aware of their obligation to report circumstances under their insurance policies. In most cases, it makes sense to report a problem before it becomes a formal claim. While this isn't always required by your insurance policy, filing a pre-claim or circumstance notice can provide access to important insurance company resources and ensure there is insurance coverage for a related claim.

Effective crisis management requires careful planning and timely execution. A well-structured risk management plan, supported by a team of professionals and a solid insurance program can help with several aspects of the recovery process. The key is recognizing the value of pre-planning and utilizing the capabilities of your risk advisor and others to assist.

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