

## Who's on your team?

Mark Zweig reflects on the passing of a friend and employee, and offers six tips about forming a winning team.

Projects are complex and take lots of cooperation with other people to get them done on time and within budget, and to a high standard of excellence. These are the kinds of people I want to work with.



Mark Zweig

### EDITORIAL

A week ago Sunday, one of my best friends, and also the lead carpenter for design/build/development firm, Mark Zweig, Inc., Gary D. "Jack" Kidd, passed away from complications due to lymphatic cancer. It was a real shame. The guy was only 67.

Jack was one of those guys who could figure out how to do anything and never said "no." I don't need to remind any of you who own businesses how great it is to have someone working with you who has such a "can do" spirit. Work is more fun and that spirit can really help keep the team together and keep everyone getting a lot done. He was a third generation carpenter who dropped out of school in the 7th or 8th grade to help take care of his siblings and chronically ill mother. He worked with me for the last 10 years of his life and we had a lot of fun together. His family asked me if I would give his eulogy. I did a pretty miserable job. I'm really going to miss him!

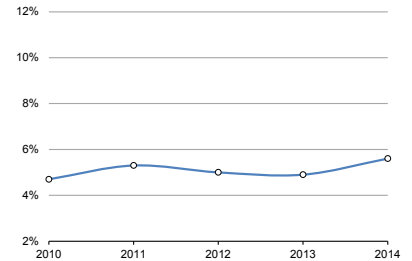
Jack's passing got me thinking about the importance of who is on the team and the qualities and characteristics I like in the people I surround myself with. Here are some things I look for in key people:

**1) Ability to work with others.** Everything we do in both of my businesses and certainly in any A/E/P or environmental

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## TRENDLINES

### More incentive



Incentive compensation spending as a percentage of total payroll at A/E/P and environmental consulting firms has increased this year after hovering close to 5 percent in recent years, according to ZweigWhite's 2014 Incentive Compensation Survey. The study finds that incentive compensation spending as a percentage of total payroll increased to a five-year high of 5.6 percent this year, following a slight decrease to 4.9 percent in 2013 from 5 percent in 2012. In 2011, this number had increased to 5.3 percent from a low of 4.7 percent in 2010. Find the survey at [www.zweigwhite.com/p-2207-incentive-compensation-survey-2014](http://www.zweigwhite.com/p-2207-incentive-compensation-survey-2014).  
— Margot Suydam, Director, Research

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## A/E BUSINESS NEWS

**GOLDER CREATES FOUNDATION** **Golder Associates** (Toronto, ON), an 8,000-person consulting, design, and construction services firm, announced that it created the not-for-profit Golder Foundation to preserve and strengthen its commitment to technical excellence and broad employee ownership, and to further its purpose of engineering earth's development and preserving earth's integrity.

The Foundation ([www.golderfoundation.org](http://www.golderfoundation.org)) has three key areas of focus:

- Technical archives to enable current and future generations to explore the technical knowledge developed by Golder professionals
- An annual awards program to recognize students who have undertaken research on important topics in Golder's core service areas
- Golder's business legacy story, in particular to share the story of the broad employee ownership structure that distinguishes Golder in the consulting industry and marketplace.

"The origin of our Foundation stems from our desire to preserve, enrich, and impart our technical expertise," said John Westland, principal at Golder who serves on the board of directors for the foundation. "We are excited to expand our archives in the ground engineering, environmental, and other sciences, salute bright students who are performing key research in our fields of endeavor, and tell the ownership story that has helped build our success over 50-plus years."

### MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

firms we work with requires a team. This is not a business of stars. Projects are complex and take lots of cooperation with other people to get them done on time and within budget, and to a high standard of excellence. These are the kinds of people I want to work with.

**2) Can-do, positive attitude.** I like people who figure out how to do things versus those who say why it won't work. Unfortunately, many technical people want to adopt the latter mindset because they think they are smart or safe to be that way. But that's not what clients want. They want "can-do" people. I do, too. They're just more fun to work with and will make you more successful.

**3) Can handle bad news and/or setbacks without getting crushed.** There will always be bad news and negative events – but we need people who don't let these things crush them. They have to deal with them and move on. By the same token, your managers cannot just bury their heads in the sand and avoid things because they're negative. That's how small problems can grow into bigger ones. I like people who confront negative events now and then move on.

**4) Flexibility and willingness to shift priorities if the situation demands it.** Project-driven businesses have changing priorities. People leaving can create holes that have to be filled. New opportunities may take someone to step up to the plate. I like people who do not draw tight boxes

You need people on your team who trust that you are acting in the best interests of the organization and in their best interests.

around themselves and what they will do or not do.

**5) Trust – for me and their fellow managers/co-workers.** You need people on your team who trust that you are acting in the best interests of the organization and in their best interests. These are the kinds of people I want to surround myself with; not those who don't trust me or their other teammates.

**6) Good intentions.** Some people have them. Others think only of themselves. The latter group will have problems with everyone who works for them. We cannot afford that. Project-centered businesses – if successful – tend to be overloaded and understaffed. We cannot afford any behavior that demotivates the other people on the team.

Surround yourself with the wrong people and you'll find your attitude suffers, productivity declines, and motivation wanes. Surround yourself with good people – ones like Jack Kidd – and you'll get a lot done and make yourself and many clients happy, too! ▲▲

MARK ZWEIG is the chairman and CEO of ZweigWhite. Contact him with questions or comments at [mzweig@zweigwhite.com](mailto:mzweig@zweigwhite.com).

The archives act as a technical resource for Golder employees, as well as academics and professionals who are interested in the history and best practices within the disciplines of ground engineering, environmental, and other sciences linked to the services provided by Golder.

The archives have been seeded with collections of reference material, presentations, speeches, and the bibliographies of published papers from six retired and semi-retired Golder professionals, including Golder founders H.Q. Golder and Victor Milligan. The foundation also welcomes potential additions from external sources.

The annual awards will encourage technical excellence among graduate students who have completed or are nearing the end of their studies. The initial awards cycle will be announced in September, and entries will be solicited from students globally.

The first two awards topics are Ground Engineering and Contaminated Site Assessment and Remediation — two of Golder's main areas of consulting practice.

The business legacy component of the foundation will focus on assisting other organizations considering employee ownership, by making available knowledge and lessons from Golder's ownership and development history.



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## ENGAGEMENT

# Establish a culture of accountability

Quantitative and qualitative goals are part of the program, as well as consistent tracking. Plus, the things leaders must foster.

By LIISA SULLIVAN  
Correspondent

**I**t's a tall order. You want to create a culture of accountability where managers, firm-wide, are given specific performance goals and goals are tracked. Sounds simple, right? Not really. At some point, it's more than likely that goals will derail due to internal or external factors. How you deal with these setbacks sets the tone for your accountability culture.

"If a goal isn't met, there is clear communication about the potential impact. Sometimes we reassign the goal to someone else in operations."

**CREATE A 'WIN-WIN MATRIX'.** Joseph Fluder III, vice president of operations, **SWCA Environmental Consultants** (Warrenville, IL), an 800-person firm, says that managers, company-wide, are given annual goals, qualitative and quantitative, during an annual performance review.

Quantitative office goals for management are discussed on a monthly basis. More specifically, top leadership has very focused quarterly goals that may be quantitative and qualitative.

For operation managers, on a quarterly basis, SWCA completes a "win-win matrix."

The win-win matrix lists:

- The goal
- Desired outcome
- Guidelines
- Resources (staff available to accomplish the goal)
- Accountability, and consequences (both negative and positive for the operation or company) of the goal either being attained or not attained.

Goals are then evaluated at the end of each quarter.

See ACCOUNTABILITY, page 4



Joseph Fluder III,  
VP of Operations,  
SWCA  
Environmental  
Consultants.



Matt Crafton,  
President and  
CEO, Crafton Tull.

### GO FOR THE GOLD

Terry St. Marie, an Oregon-based business consultant, says that when it comes to creating a culture of accountability, the key is to getting to a place where, "The need to be good is replaced with a relentless passion to be great."

He shares 10 things he believes every leader must do to foster this culture:

1. **Roles and responsibilities are clearly (and properly) defined.** What are the expectations of every position, and why do they matter? They must be thought through, and documented. It's time consuming, yes, but there will be a huge return on that investment.
2. **New hires reflect a match of the right personalities (and skillsets) with the jobs.** No matter how hard we try, we can't change personalities. If someone isn't predisposed to thrive in a culture of accountability, don't hire them.
3. **The "what" and "why" are communicated, relentlessly.** The leader is a "contextual conduit," providing clarity and consistency at every opportunity. You're not saying it enough until you hear, "There he (or she) goes again."
4. **The right metrics and measurements are set up.** Each position needs objectives that measure success, from both a personal, team and company-wide perspective. Choose them wisely, and keep them to a small and manageable number.
5. **The metrics are monitored and measured, relentlessly.** All the cool metrics in the world can't do a lick of good unless there's a human digesting (and using) them. Don't create reports that will never be read.
6. **Performance reviews are not "have to dos" but "want to dos."** Interactions between leader and teammate regarding performance should be an ongoing open dialogue, not a process driven, obligatory drudgery. They should be welcomed, not feared.
7. **When expectations are not met, consequences must follow.** It's all about being fair and honest. It not only affects the person involved, but the entire team.
8. **Peer mentoring should be encouraged.** There's nothing more rewarding than seeing long time teammates take a new peer under their wing, or seeing team meetings that rarely need management intervention to inspire better performance.
9. **Great performance has to be acknowledged and rewarded.** The other end of the spectrum but just as important (see #7 above).
10. **Leaders have to show the way and hold themselves accountable.** Leaders have to "walk the walk." You have to be more human. Only then will the culture of accountability really take flight.

"Don't just 'need to be good,'" St. Marie says, "Go for greatness."

## NEWS

# Quakes threat to urban areas

Professor testifies before Congress.

**A**ndrew Whittaker, director of AMCEER at the University at Buffalo, told Congress on July 29 that the United States is not prepared for effects of a major earthquake in a large urban area. Whittaker testified before the Subcommittee on Research and Technology of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space and Technology at a hearing to review the National Earthquake Hazards reduction Program (NEHRP).

The subcommittee is chaired by Congressman Larry Bucshon, (R-IN) and the committee's ranking member is Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-IL).

Whittaker reported that the U.S. is not prepared, in part, because the effects of such an event, both economic and social, will be felt far from its epicenter. "Lifelines are at the core of resilience," Whittaker said, "and we do not understand the vulnerability of our lifelines, their interdependencies, and the cascading effects of lifeline failures, regionally and nationally, and so we can neither judge nor characterize our earthquake resilience."

He presented several specific recommendations for research and development aimed at earthquake preparation

and mitigation. He calls this "a multi-disciplinary endeavor, requiring contributions from earth scientists and seismologists, geotechnical and structural engineers, social scientists and planners."

Whittaker's testimony pointed to the 2011 National Research Council report on National Earthquake Resilience, which presented a roadmap for achieving resilience that was constructed around 18 elements. His key recommendations cut across these 18 elements and included a call for the U.S. Geological Survey to build out and maintain the Advanced National Seismic System and support its maintenance; and for the National Science Foundation to adequately support earthquake engineering research infrastructure and to provide funds to enable researchers to take full advantage of this infrastructure. He also recommended NEHRP investments in lifelines, tools and technology to harden vulnerable buildings, the development of seismic isolators and dampers to protect high-value components in building and non-building structures, performance-based earthquake engineering for buildings and non-building structures, and funding of technology transfer, including a substantial strengthening of support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. ▀▀

## ACCOUNTABILITY, from page 3

"Every quarter, some goals aren't met," Fluder says. "It can be because other goals evolve or become more important for the employee or their operation, or simply because an employee didn't prioritize the goal. If a goal isn't met, there is clear communication about the potential impact. Sometimes we reassign the goal to someone else in operations."

**USE IT LOSE IT.** Matt Crafton, president and CEO, **Crafton Tull** (Rogers, AR), a 275-person architecture and engineering firm, says that he has done different things through the years, from setting targets for revenue, sales, utilization, variance, etc. to setting

goals for more personal items like education and training. Tracking also varies and Crafton admits that it has not always been very consistent.

"We've left it to the division leaders to set and track goals for managers within their division," he says. "Our culture tends to be fairly 'longsuffering,' realizing there are always many factors involved in both successes and failures. Poor performance is addressed through day-to-day communication, monthly reports and an annual performance evaluation. Ultimately, if someone can't or won't improve his/her performance, they will have to go work someplace else." ▀▀

## RESOURCES

**FEE & BILLING SURVEY** How do you set fee and billing rates that maximize profitability without scaring your potential customers away? Since 1998, thousands of design and environmental firm leaders have turned to ZweigWhite's Fee & Billing Survey of Architecture, Engineering, Planning & Environmental Consulting Firms for standards on design fees, employee hourly billing rates, subconsultant procedures, and reimbursement policies.

The 2014 edition includes the latest available data on fee structures for every major market type, billing rates and chargeability statistics for 27 levels of employee (from clerks up through principals), ways firms usually charge for subconsultant fees and reimbursable expenses, how firms collect payment, and much more.

In addition to helping you set fees, billing rates, and other contract details internally, this book is also a great tool to show clients or potential clients. Fee negotiations aren't always as easy as you'd like them to be, so use the data in this report to tell your client exactly why they should pay what your firm is charging.

If your firm works in any of the following markets, you'll want to see these survey results:

- Commercial development
- Corporate facilities
- Education (K-12)
- Education (Higher education)
- Healthcare
- Transportation
- Federal/state/municipal
- Industrial facilities
- Multifamily residential
- Single family residential
- Environmental – public & private

In addition to statistics on contract types for each of the above markets, industry norms for fees as a percentage of construction costs are given for the following services/disciplines (as applicable for each market): Architecture, land planning, landscape architecture, interior design, civil engineering, structural engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and construction management.

For more information or to buy a copy, call 800-466-6275 or log on to [www.zweigwhite.com/p-2202-fee-billing-survey-2014](http://www.zweigwhite.com/p-2202-fee-billing-survey-2014).

## SURVEY

# What's going on with project management?

2014 Project Management Study finds that the number of PMs continues to rise as jobs become more complicated.

By CHRISTINA ZWEIG  
Contributing editor

**T**echnology, the economy, financing regulations and environmental concerns have all transformed the way we run our firms and manage our projects.

ZweigWhite's 2014 Project Management Study of Architecture, Engineering, Planning, & Environmental Consulting Firms finds that with a stronger focus on the bottom line and competition fiercer than ever, internal project management methodologies and practices warrant a closer look.

In the past, great architecture or engineering alone never ensured the project would be delivered successfully. That's truer than ever now. Success depends on how we lead the client, consultants, contractors, stakeholders, and communities through the entire experience. Great project management is imperative.

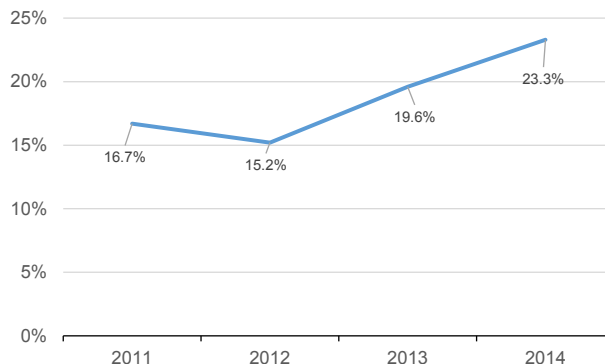
"The percentage of all staff who are project managers has risen since 2011 and is up to a median of 23.3 percent in 2014 from 19.6 percent the previous year."

**PM RISING.** A/E/P and environmental firms are increasing the number of project managers they have. The percentage of all staff who are project managers has risen since 2011 and is up to a median of 23.3 percent in 2014 from 19.6 percent the previous year, according to the survey.

The study found that 52 percent of project managers have earned a bachelor's degree, and almost half (40 percent) have earned a master's degree or MBA. The majority of PMs (83 percent) are registered technical professionals. Three-quarters of PMs (75 percent) report they are registered engineers.

The typical project manager has been with his or her firm for a median of 11 years. PMs have generally held this position in their firm for a median of seven years. Eighty percent of project managers have at least 15 years of experience in the design and environmental consulting industry.

## PERCENTAGE OF ALL STAFF WHO ARE PMs



Source: 2014 Project Management Study, ZweigWhite, [www.zweigwhite.com/p-2199-project-management-survey-2014](http://www.zweigwhite.com/p-2199-project-management-survey-2014).

**PM PROJECT CHALLENGES.** Staffing issues have been a common concern at A/E firms in recent years. When project managers were asked if they felt in general projects were sufficiently staffed, responses were nearly split down the middle.

Survey responses included, "I have important clients we want to keep happy!" "We can pull from the entire resources of the firm to staff our project needs," and "We have staff that can be assigned to handle specific components of a project similar to an assembly line." Negative responses included profitability demands, difficulty finding high quality staff, "projects that morph," and "growing business with limited resources."

Regardless of how much time and staff firms devote to planning, it is pretty much inevitable that unforeseen factors (both internal and external) will arise at some point during a project. The Project Management Study asked PMs what kinds of factors have the most impact on their projects.

Jay Martin, senior project manager, **Cornerstone Environmental** (Overland Park, KS), a 160-person environmental consulting firm, says "client-made changes" are one of the most impactful external factors and "lack of time" is among the most impactful internal factors relating to successful project management.

The survey found that when it comes to internal factors, PMs report communication breakdowns (56 percent), inadequate fee for work required (38 percent), and/or unrealistic deadlines or schedules (34 percent) have the most impact on their projects.

When it comes to external factors, PMs report owner or client requested changes (74 percent) have the most impact on their projects. ▀▲

# Working with creative minds

Eight marketing tips design professionals know but like to ignore.

*To protect my job, let me preface this article by saying none of the eight tips described below are ever ignored by the designers whom I work with at **Little** (wink, wink).*

The best part about working at a design firm is that the entire environment is an incubator for creativity – it truly is a marketer’s dream. This is completely opposite to my previous marketing job with a law firm, where images involving a handshake and an old school briefcase were sure to prevail. It’s the creativity, passion and attention to detail that make designers such endearing creatures. It’s also their creativity, passion and attention to detail that has the potential to send even the best of us marketing professionals into a full blown, better watch your back frenzy.

While I understand that design professionals are who they are and that no two are alike, there are a consistent handful of tips that I’m sure they are aware of, but like to ignore. Why? The jury is still out, but I’ve found that constant reminders, along with manageable solutions to stay true to these tips, can make a measureable difference.

**1) Less is more.** Someone once said that the enemy of simplicity is the curse of knowledge. Designers can harness their passion and excitement by complicating, over thinking and draping layer upon layer – although they typically do this with honest intentions. This happens on everything from proposals to presentations. The key is to consistently remind designers to edit, edit more and edit again. Take a look at Don McMillian’s “Life After Death by Powerpoint” if you’re not already familiar with it. While specifically addressing PowerPoint presentations, the book sets the stage for a discussion about the value of simplicity across multiple marketing efforts.

**2) Social media is for all ages.** The value of social media is in the conversation. If no one is talking (or the conversation is limited to a small group), there’s little value. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, Vimeo and Google+ – the ever expanding list can be overwhelming. The trick to hooking even the loudest naysayer is to start small. Focus on one platform initially (either as a firm or with individuals) and as comfort level grows, so will your social media outreach.

**3) CRM only gives what it gets.** Remember when I referenced the full blown, better watch your back crazy frenzy? Enter frenzy, stage left. There’s nothing more unproductive than sending out an electronic communication piece to 5,000 people only to get the dreaded “undeliverable” message 4,500 times. There is no doubt that maintaining a CRM



Kelly Thompson

GUEST  
SPEAKER

(client relationship management) system is hard work and potentially a full-time job, but investing the necessary time is well worth it. Find a reliable, yet relatively simple CRM software and make sure every single contact in it has a primary “owner.” In the absence of a full time database manager, make it the responsibility of each owner to revisit his/her contact list on a quarterly basis.

**4) You DO need to practice.** For the most part, designers are fairly comfortable with presenting. The foundation of numerous college critiques has helped prepare them for an audience armed with pressing questions. However, it’s this sense of ease that brings forth those dreaded words, “I’ll just wing it.” Whether presenting to a client for the first or 11th time, practicing gives you confidence you simply can’t get in any other way. Mentally organize your material in writing, then practice out loud to anchor it in your mind. You won’t get lost if you know what you’re talking about.

See KELLY THOMPSON, page 8

While I understand that design professionals are who they are and that no two are alike, there are a consistent handful of tips that I’m sure they are aware of, but like to ignore. I’ve found that constant reminders, along with manageable solutions to stay true to these tips, can make a measureable difference.

# Expanding your business

If vertical or horizontal expansion (or both) is in the cards for you, approach with caution.

**B**usiness has been good lately in the A/E professions. Opportunities abound, yet many firms struggle with the question of if, where and how to grow their business. Expansion is tough, complicated and expensive, and the landscape is littered with firms that have struggled to diversify and expand their practices. What's the best strategy – vertical, horizontal, or both?

Vertical expansion suggests there are other services current clients are buying that your firm could offer as a suite of services. If well integrated, each one becomes more valuable than if offered alone. Consider the number of design-related practices we often align with, formally or informally, that round out the full array of services our clients require to enhance their business performance. These include master planning, facilities management, lighting design, graphics and a host of others.

Here's an example and a cautionary tale.

In our practice at **Gensler**, we defined “design” as anything that could be seen or used and requiring management over time. This included a full array of carefully integrated services. Each person, working in their area of expertise, was thoroughly briefed by colleagues working with a given client. In that way, we all knew how the client liked to work, their priorities, what they were trying to achieve, and a complete “who's who” within the client company, so everyone understood how decisions were made and who had the authority to make them.

An example includes a manufacturing client for whom we were providing master planning for their corporate campus, conventional architectural services, renovation, interior design, showroom design (more like store planning), product design and graphic design. The graphic design was not confined to their facilities, but also included print graphics, marketing collateral, brochures, advertising copy, with a little bit of branding and identity thrown in for good measure.

We thought we were doing pretty well and invited our client (she had oversight for all of the areas we were working in) to attend the annual Detroit auto show with us. She was a real auto buff, and we thought she would enjoy tagging along and meeting some of our auto industry clients. She was thrilled and, after having a wonderful day at the show, joined us for dinner. After some light chatter about cars, she said, “You know, I'm really quite worried about our relationship.” That sent a chill up my spine.



Ed  
Friedrichs

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

She was concerned that as a firm we could not be truly world-class in every type of service we offered. She likened it to an ad agency that expands their business by adding areas of specialty from media buying, to print and collateral material, to branding. But the agency is only truly “world-class” in one core strength.

Gensler worked very hard to compete in each of our service areas on a stand-alone basis with firms specialized in those areas. Our “secret sauce” was that each service was truly integrated with the others to deliver more comprehensive solutions. I made that pitch to our guest but suggested she benchmark us against firms she considered “world-class” in any of the areas we offered. I said I would check back in a few months to see how our work compared.

See ED FRIEDRICHS, page 8

The lesson about expanding vertically? Each service has to be able to stand alone, competing with the best. Then, you have to add something very special, demonstrating your added value through flawless and seamless delivery of integrated services.

ED FRIEDRICHS, from page 7

Horizontal expansion refers to a new area of practice for your firm. Do you hire someone with a reputation in that specialty? Someone you think has the skills to grow a practice? Do you acquire a firm with that expertise?

When we spoke again, I asked how we were doing. Her response? “The work you do is terrific, but the best part is it’s well-coordinated with everything else we’re doing. It’s just too hard to manage a bunch of stand-alone firms who have no incentive to collaborate with everyone else we work with, or to really get to know us, our priorities, and our ways of working.”

The lesson about expanding vertically? Each service has to be able to stand alone, competing with the best. Then, you have to add something very special, demonstrating your added value through flawless and seamless delivery of integrated services.

Horizontal expansion refers to a new area of practice for your firm. Do you hire someone with a reputation in that specialty? Someone you think has the skills to grow a practice? Do you acquire a firm with that expertise? Is there someone already within your firm who has expressed a strong interest in pursuing healthcare, higher education,

critical facilities, airports, criminal justice or something else that is new to you? Those questions apply to vertical expansion as well.

Any of these options can succeed, but each contains pitfalls. Hiring an individual means committing to building a practice to support what he or she might sell. This represents a substantial expense before the work is actually booked. But it’s hard to book the work until a team is in place. Acquiring or merging with another firm offers a potentially faster path to the market, but the A/E professions are littered with failed acquisitions and mergers when the cultures of the firms are not well integrated.

An opportunity to make all of your work better comes from a broader practice through cross learning and leverage between your practices (e.g., airports and hospitality; retail and branding and graphics). Otherwise, what have you gained by having them under one roof?

Successful expansion is not just about the ability to do the work; it’s also about defining your offering in a unique way. Without that, you’re simply a commodity. It’s hard. So, only do it if you’re prepared to expend the effort and investment to become among the very best at the areas you pursue, and can demonstrate a unique approach no one else is offering.

Perhaps both vertical *and* horizontal strategies are the way to do exactly that. ▲▲

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KELLY THOMPSON, from page 6

**5) Perfect the art of storytelling.** When presenting to win new work or communicating a concept, storytelling can be a powerful and effective way to get your point across. We all organize knowledge, experiences and thoughts as stories. When a designer ties his/her work and expertise to a story, it automatically gets rooted in authenticity, which sparks emotion and action.

**6) Answer the questions.** To accommodate busy schedules, design professionals often rely too heavily on a previously developed proposal or presentation to accommodate a current need. There’s certainly no reason to reinvent the wheel if it’s not necessary, but adaptation shouldn’t be the fall back option. Closely evaluate what’s being requested and address those needs specifically and directly. You can present the most eloquent and elaborate answers but if they ignore the actual questions, you’re as good as dead.

**7) Utilize your resources.** I am fortunate to be part of an amazing team of marketing and graphic design professionals who want nothing more than to have our internal clients succeed, and based on my experience, involvement in a project from the very beginning is the best way to ensure success. Design professionals oftentimes have great marketing ideas, and it’s important to flesh them out early on, evaluate feasibility and have a clear implementation strategy. There are resources that do this (and much more) for a living – make them part of your team and you’ll all be more successful.

**8) A happy client is your greatest asset.** Everyone knows the importance of keeping clients happy, but how can this

When presenting to win new work or communicating a concept, storytelling can be a powerful and effective way to get your point across. We all organize knowledge, experiences and thoughts as stories. When a designer ties his/her work and expertise to a story, it automatically gets rooted in authenticity, which sparks emotion and action.

relationship be leveraged beyond a standard reference letter? Focus on creating an ongoing partnership that leads to joint speaking engagements, writing opportunities and even research studies. This not only demonstrates your commitment to client service; it deepens relationships with clients who may have future projects or may be in a position to refer others to your company.

Arming yourselves with these strategies should go a long way in developing marketing habits that make both the designer and the marketer happy. After all, even the most creatively driven brain can understand positive results on the bottom line. ▲▲

KELLY THOMPSON is marketing communications manager at **Little** (Charlotte, NC). Contact her at [kthompson@littleonline.com](mailto:kthompson@littleonline.com).



## ENGAGEMENT

# Get employees involved in recruitment

Firms have programs that incentivize employees to find new team members among their friends.

By LIISA SULLIVAN  
Correspondent

Sometimes it's a good idea to ask on the inside before you venture to the outside. Getting employees involved in the recruiting process is a win-win for all.

**GLOBAL NEEDS CALL FOR EMPLOYEE NETWORKING.** Sherry Hennes, global director of human resources at **Moffatt & Nichol** (Long Beach, CA), a 600-person global infrastructure advisor, says that with a current worldwide employee population and offices on multiple continents, the firm continues to experience a substantial increase in the numbers of hires it must make to meet project needs and business obligations.

"We've maintained an aggressive, but well-thought-out growth strategy founded on the continuing global success of the firm," she says. "This growth strategy requires us to keep our eye on adding to our bench strength in our core disciplines and diversification into new areas, resulting in an overall strengthening of the firm. At the very heart of our ability to continue to meet these goals is our desire to retain the talented staff we have in place."

Moffatt & Nichol accomplishes this by identifying growth opportunities that meet the personal and professional needs of employees, balanced with a tremendous need to hire additional staff to fill new opportunities. Employees play a vital role in the recruiting process.

"We believe our ability to identify and hire the caliber and number of additional staff needed is dependent on each of our employees taking an active role in bringing talented candidates to the team," Hennes says. "The pride our staff exhibits in being a part of the Moffatt & Nichol team, and their excitement in telling others about the great opportunities available with the company, continues to be our greatest recruiting tool."

**ALIGN EMPLOYEES WITH CANDIDATES.** Wren Ward, corporate recruiter, **Garver** (North Little Rock, AR), a 361-person multi-disciplined engineering, planning, and environmental services firm, says that they involve employees in all levels of recruiting.



Sherry Hennes,  
Global Director  
of HR, Moffatt &  
Nichol.



Wren Ward,  
Corporate  
Recruiter, Garver.



Kimi Duplichan,  
Associate and HR  
Manager, WHR  
Architects, Inc.

"We're fortunate to have the support of our firm's leadership to encourage all of our staff to help attract and recruit experienced professionals that align with Garver's values," she says.

When approaching a candidate, whether at the intern level or senior project manager level, Ward looks to those in the company whose experience, networking associations or personal hobbies may be similar to the candidate's.

"Most candidates are going to meet their direct supervisor throughout the recruiting process, but we believe it's also important to allow a candidate to meet those who would be their peers and coworkers as well," she says.

Ward finds that involving the staff helps to secure buy-in, provides another perspective through the interview process and allows Garver to ensure that it is making the best hiring decision. It also allows the candidate to gain more knowledge about the daily work environment and to ensure an answer to all questions.

"We encourage our people to recommend their friends and colleagues by offering a \$1,000 referral bonus. In just the past year, we've paid out more than a dozen referral bonuses."

**INCENTIVES ARE ADDED BONUSES.** Moffatt & Nichol has a referral bonus program in place for nearly a decade. The company views the money paid out each year as an investment – not an expense.

"We pay referral bonuses that range from between \$1,500 and \$5,000 and have just implemented a new social media recruiting program that involves our employees showing the world what they do every day and translate this into 'this could be you'," Hennes says.

Year over year, Moffatt & Nichol's diverse employee population help fill more than 80 percent of open positions. This is directly attributable to very low turnover.

Kimi Duplichan, associate and HR manager, **WHR**

See RECRUITMENT, page 10

## ON THE MOVE

**DESIGN WORKSHOP PROMOTES AND HIRES** **Design Workshop** (Denver, CO), an international landscape architecture, planning, and urban design firm with offices and work spanning the globe, is announced a promotion and a new hire.

**Meredith Wenskoski** has been promoted to principal. As a landscape architect at Design Workshop, Wenskoski has more than eight years of experience in urban redevelopment, parks and public space design. She is distinguished for her leadership, design and project management of large-scale complex efforts. She has worked on public parks, streetscapes and urban design projects focusing on developing responsible and innovative designs that respond to the needs of the place and community.

Wenskoski is known for her interdisciplinary team leadership, her responsiveness to clients and her excellent communication skills. A firm believer in the benefits of collaboration, she forms strong long-term working relationships with design teams and clients. Wenskoski is recognized for her rigor and follow-through and for instilling discipline and accountability into design processes.

The firm hired **Lance Lowrey** to assist Houston office principal-in-charge Steven Spears and office director Amy Harbert. Lowrey is an experienced landscape design professional with 15 years of experience in the field. Most recently, he worked for WATG as a project coordinator in Irvine, Calif., where he managed projects and design support for a range of national and international projects within the studio.

Lowrey started in July in the Houston office where he will assist on Houston Uptown. He will relocate back to Los Angeles on Jan. 1, 2015, to work with Chuck Ware, Design Workshop's Southern California principal-in-charge focusing on projects in Southern California and the Middle East.

**LJA HIRES LJA** (Houston, TX), a 425-person full-service civil engineering firm, announced **Gregg Haan** has been promoted to division manager, water and wastewater in the firm's Land Development Division.

Haan has over 17 years of experience in civil engineering for water and wastewater projects, including management of design teams, project design, managing water distribution modeling for LJA, coordination with governmental agencies, and municipal wastewater infrastructure construction management. His projects have included water plants, wastewater plants, storm water projects, and sanitary sewage lift stations in Harris, Brazoria, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Galveston counties.

In his new role, Haan will manage a team focused primarily on providing water and wastewater design services to support the Houston Land Development Division, in addition to expanding his involvement in the firm's marketing and business development activities.

## RECRUITMENT, from page 9

**Architects, Inc.** (Houston, TX), a 163-person, full-service architecture, interior design and technology planning firm, says that employee referrals produce some of the best candidates.

"We encourage our people to recommend their friends and colleagues by offering a \$1,000 referral bonus," she says. "In just the past year, we've paid out more than a dozen referral bonuses."

Garver continues to promote its referral program to employ-

**SSE HIRES Sam Schwartz Engineering** (New York, NY), a firm that specializes in developing context-sensitive transportation solutions, has hired two new staff members.

**Michael Flynn** has joined SSE as director of Active Transportation. Flynn previously served as the director of capital planning and project initiation at the New York City Department of Transportation, leading teams responsible for developing the city's capital street construction program, scoping and budgeting street improvement projects, and implementing green infrastructure programs. He played a critical role in delivering dozens of capital projects per year spanning safety (Vision Zero), public plazas, delect bus service, greenways, and state-of-good-repair. In nearly 10 years at NYCDOT he also coordinated the production and publication of the award-winning New York City Street Design Manual as a senior project manager on the Public Space and Urban Design team and served as a project manager in pedestrian and bicycle programs, where he designed and implemented traffic calming, pedestrian plaza, and bike lane projects. Flynn is also a visiting professor in the City and Regional Planning Program at Pratt Institute.

**Janet Sharkey** has joined SSE as a project manager in the New York City office's Traffic Engineering group. She brings 15 years of experience in the management and performance of transportation engineering, planning, and consulting services. Currently, Sharkey is working on traffic and safety studies for the Hugh L. Carey/Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel and various Con Edison facilities. Her previous experience includes conducting extensive traffic studies and pedestrian analyses for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey and for several large-scale, mixed-use developments in the region, including the Willets Point development plan in Queens.

**SNC-LAVALIN HIRES SNC-Lavalin Group** (Montréal, QB), a 30,000-person engineering and construction firm, announced the appointment of **Marc Rivard** to the role of executive vice-president, Infrastructure Engineering, within the company's Infrastructure Group. SNC-Lavalin's Infrastructure Group addresses the full life cycle of infrastructure, and includes its infrastructure concession investment, engineering, construction and operations and maintenance businesses.

Based in Montréal, Rivard will lead the global Infrastructure Engineering business unit, which provides consulting, planning and engineering services in a variety of sectors, including mass transit, railways, roads, bridges, ports and harbors, facilities, buildings, as well as water and wastewater infrastructure.

Rivard has over 27 years of experience in the industry, and joins SNC-Lavalin after eight and half years with **WSP** (previously **GENIVAR**), where he was president of the company's operations in Canada, the Caribbean and France, which included more than 5,000 personnel in over 100 offices. He also played a key role in the development, execution and integration of the firm's acquisition strategy.

ees too because its track record has proven that a referred candidate often saves the firm time and money. By offering sizeable referral bonuses to employees, Garver saves time that would normally be spent hunting for the right candidate, as well as time saved toward project deadlines. All this saves money that could be lost while the position is vacant or saves money that would be paid to an outside recruiter.

"It's exciting to see our staff want to be involved in recruiting and be just as invested in finding the right fit for our company," Ward says. "Our referral program helps motivate our employees to recruit, but keeping them included throughout the process is ultimately most rewarding for everyone." ▲▲

## OUTLOOK

# Projecting revenue involves little guessing

Projecting is just that... there's no magic bullet, but there are some things to keep in mind to keep accuracy close.

By LIISA SULLIVAN  
Correspondent

**H**ow far down the road should firms look when it comes to making revenue projections? And, then how do they work to ensure that they actually realize accurate projections? Lots of preliminary legwork is involved.

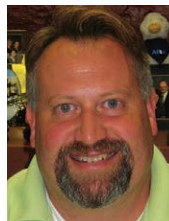
**TAKE TWO.** Robert Coons, director of finance, **Randall Paulson Architects** (Roswell, GA), a 26-person firm, says that he does two things first:

- 1) Every November, he reviews the active client listing and does a 12-month projection of what he thinks may happen from a complete year perspective (this dollar amount is then used for budgeting purposes and is reviewed monthly against actuals).
- 2) Every month, after billing, each studio leader reviews their current backlog, plus any imminent projects and prepares a four-month forecast to see where they are going. This is usually fairly accurate for the first two months, but often fluctuates downward for the third and fourth months.

“Projections that don’t materialize are just part of doing business, but the loss of too many projected projects over a six-month period would be enough to consider cuts in corporate expenses.”

Coons says that the second step listed above is quite helpful for two reasons: a) “It lets us know in advance if hard times are approaching so that we can make manpower and financial adjustments accordingly,” and b) “Toward year-end it helps in our cash forecasting for bonus and tax planning purposes.”

**IT’S ALL PART OF DOING BUSINESS.** Coons adds that while you can never really completely ensure you are going to get your projected revenue, there are some things you can do to try to stay as close to projected revenues as possible. Randall Paulson does a lot of upfront preliminary design work “pro bono” for long-term clients so that they can have professional imagery for use



Robert Coons,  
Director of  
Finance,  
Randall Paulson  
Architects.

### GOOD TO KNOW

Firms project revenue to grow a median of 18.9 percent in three years, 34.8 percent in five years, and 79.5 percent in 10 years.

Source: 2014 Financial Performance Survey, ZweigWhite, [www.zweigwhite.com/p-2195-financial-performance-survey-2014](http://www.zweigwhite.com/p-2195-financial-performance-survey-2014).

### 4 TIPS FOR MAKING ACCURATE REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Funding Gates, an online application for small businesses that allows them to track, organize and manage their receivables, provides four tips for how businesses can set up revenue forecasting to be as accurate as possible:

- **Estimate sales.** Start by referencing your previous sales history. Look at the past two years and try to get a good idea of what kind of weekly or monthly sales you can expect to see. Take into consideration patterns that are the same each year (seasons and holidays, for example) and factors that could change, such as trade shows, when making your projections. If you don’t have previous sales to reference because you are a new business, try to put together an estimate by looking at industry standards, considering performance of similar businesses, or even a customer survey.
- **Keep a watchful eye on payment terms.** You likely know that you do not always receive the money you earn immediately. For many of your sales, you could be waiting 30-plus days to see that cash. Therefore, it’s important when doing a revenue forecast to estimate when you expect payment from your sales.
- **Monitor money out the door.** You need to know how much you are spending. While these costs will be fixed and variable, do the best you can to make accurate predictions. Fixed costs are things as rent and salaries. Variable costs are, most of the time, associated with the sale of the product or service you are providing. Therefore, reference back to your forecasted sales to help estimate some of these variable costs. Also, estimate what bills you will have and when they will be due. Be sure to go through your expenses for the last year, as well, to make sure there aren’t any annual fees that you forget about. Once estimated, be sure to add these costs to your cash flow forecast.
- **Adding it all up.** If you’ve followed the steps above, then you’ve been able to properly estimate your expected income and expenses. Now, it’s time to bring those numbers together and put them to use. To begin, add in an opening bank balance, then simply add in whatever your revenue is (minus expenses) for whatever time periods you’re looking to forecast (weekly, monthly, and so on). Remember, the accuracy and effectiveness of these forecasts are going to depend on how often you forecast and how detailed you are in making projections.

Remember, cash flow management and revenue projections go hand in hand.

See REVENUE, page 12

## TRANSACTIONS

**AECOM CONTINUES TO BUY AECOM Technology Corporation** (Los Angeles, CA), the world's No. 1-ranked engineering design firm, announced that it has acquired **Hunt Construction Group**, significantly adding to AECOM's construction services business.

Hunt Construction Group, which serves clients in both the public and private sectors, is one of the country's leading commercial construction management firms. It was established in 1944, has more than 700 employees in nine U.S. offices and generated revenues of US\$1.2 billion in 2013.

"The addition of Hunt's people and resources immediately makes AECOM one of the largest U.S. builders," said Michael Burke, AECOM president and chief executive officer.

"This important expansion of our build expertise reflects the continued advancement of our strategy to create an integrated delivery platform with superior capabilities to design, build, finance and operate infrastructure assets globally."

On July 13, AECOM announced a definitive agreement to acquire **URS Corporation** (San Francisco, CA) a transaction that is expected to close in October 2014. The transaction is subject to customary closing conditions, including regulatory approvals and approval by AECOM and URS stockholders.

The combined company, including Hunt, would be a leading, fully integrated infrastructure and federal services provider with more than 95,000 employees in 150 countries. It would have calendar year 2013 pro forma revenues of more than \$20 billion.

"Hunt presents a compelling strategic fit for our business — combining its expertise in the sports, healthcare and aviation markets with our construction services team's recognized strength in the commercial tall buildings, residential and hospitality sectors," said Daniel McQuade, AECOM chief executive, construction services. "We welcome Hunt's employees to AECOM and look forward to the continued growth of our construction services practice."

"Becoming part of AECOM provides expanded growth opportunities for our business and our people, as we are now better positioned to continue working on the largest and most challenging projects," said Mike Fratianni, Hunt Construction Group chief executive, who will retain his position with the operation, as will Robert Hunt, chairman emeritus.

Recent Hunt Construction Group projects include Marlins Park in Miami, home of Major League Baseball's Miami Marlins; and the Maynard H. Jackson Jr. International Terminal at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Hunt also managed the construction of facilities at which AECOM provided design services, such as the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., and the Proton Therapy Clinic at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix.

Additionally, AECOM announced that Madrid-based **ACE International Consultants S.L.** has joined its international development business. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

ACE International Consultants is a consulting firm specializing in economic and social development cooperation and private sector development. Its primary client is EuropeAID, with additional work funded by the World Bank, the InterAmerican Development Bank, and the European Training Foundation.

The firm has approximately 80 employees who leverage their working relationships with a global network of roughly 8,000 experts in nearly 140 countries to advance clients' programs.

ACE International Consultants' recent projects include work in Algeria, Colombia, Croatia, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, South Africa, Tunisia and Turkey.

## FIRMS ON THE MOVE

**DESIGN WORKSHOP OPENS IN HOUSTON** Design Workshop (Denver, CO) an international landscape architecture, planning, and urban design firm with eight offices and work spanning the globe, announced the opening of a new office location in Houston.

The expansion aims to serve the firm's clients throughout Houston and the Gulf region, as well as their international markets. The new office space is located at 410 Pierce St., Suite 331 and will be led by Design Workshop President, Rebecca Leonard, and principal Steven Spears.

Leonard and Spears are both shareholders of the firm and started the Austin office in 2008. In Addition, Amy Harbert and Fenglin Du will also lead the office.

"We are very excited for this opportunity to have a permanent home in Houston. We have been fortunate to create significant projects in Houston such as Springwoods Village Master Plan, Hardy Yards Redevelopment, Bagby Street Reconstruction, Houston Arboretum and Nature Center Master Plan, multiple mixed use and multifamily housing developments, and a variety of urban design and planning studies with HGAC. We will continue to provide exceptional planning and design services to both the public and private sector," Leonard said.

The Houston office will offer services in landscape architecture, urban design, community and regional planning, and graphic design.

## RESOURCES

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT STUDY** The 2014 Project Management Study of Architecture, Engineering, Planning & Environmental Consulting Firms is the only source of hard data available on how project management really works in the architecture, engineering, planning, and environmental consulting industry.

With this study on project management, you'll find out how your competition handles project management issues and what you can do to make sure your firm does it better. Get an inside, in-depth look at your peers' project management practices.

For more information or to buy a copy, call 800-466-6275 or log on to [www.zweigwhite.com/p-2199-project-management-survey-2014](http://www.zweigwhite.com/p-2199-project-management-survey-2014).

## REVENUE, from page 11

in acquiring new work, for which the firm has budgeted.

"This also enables us to know what may be coming down the pike (say four, five or even six months into the future)," Coons says.

Coons says that so far, results have been pretty positive.

"Fortunately, our budgeted and monthly projections are met 90 percent of the time (give or take a 10 percent swing in either direction)," he says. "Projections that don't materialize are just part of doing business, but the loss of too many projected projects over a six-month period would be enough to consider cuts in corporate expenses (which could include the reduction in staff or salaries, but not limited to these items alone)." ▲▲