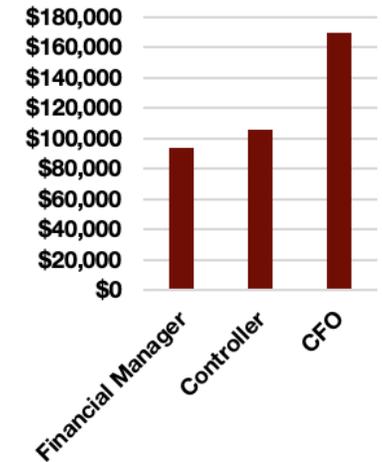


TRENDLINES

Finance leaders



Zweig Group's *2020 Salary Survey of Northeast & South Atlantic Engineering Firms* provides median base salaries for technical and administrative roles alike across the East Coast. A concerted effort to break down titles of nontechnical departments was made this year to give firms a better view of their administrative team. For example, while reports of the last few years combined three financial leaders into one group to get an overview of the role, the group has been split into three positions for analysis in 2020 and beyond: Financial managers, controllers, and CFOs.

Participate in a survey and save \$320 on any Zweig Group research publication. Visit bit.ly/TZLsp to learn more.

FIRM INDEX

Bowtie Engineering.....	12
EDiS.....	6
Geolnsight, Inc.....	10
HNTB Corporation.....	12
T. Baker Smith.....	4
The Austin Company.....	2
Ware Malcomb.....	12

MORE ARTICLES

- MARK ZWEIG: Forgotten fundamentals of marketing Page 3
- Family legacy: Brian DiSabatino Page 6
- LINDSAY YOUNG: Show your value Page 9
- KYLE CHEERANGIE: Leadership essentials Page 11

Morality and business

Use careful thought and consideration when defining your firm's value, moral, and ethical framework.



Phil Keil

The complexity and pace of change in the current business environment requires that value creation and decision making cannot be centralized. Many firms use the word “innovative” in their mission or vision yet lack the iterative processes, framework, or ecosystems that actually encourage innovation. I’m sure most leaders will agree that they do not have a monopoly on winning ideas. That is why creating an ecosystem that allows ideas to naturally and consistently emerge is vital. Doing so requires developing capabilities for exploring new ideas, experimentation, iteration, comfort with failure, and working with external partners.

I’m always happy to discuss, at length, the execution and implementation of this ecosystem; however, we must first tackle something much more foundational if we are to have any success whatsoever. It is something that has become taboo or passé. What I’m talking about is the role of morality, values, and ethics in business.

Admittedly, the subject is nuanced, and the topic will not be sufficiently covered in this article. It is, however, the underpinning of everything that is successful, or not, within our organizations, even if we’d rather not admit it. The foundation of values, morality, and ethics is what ultimately is embodied in our culture.

Now, we typically link morals to matters of religion and spirituality. Meanwhile, ethics are closely linked to matters pertaining to professional life. In fact, many disciplines or professional organizations have their own code of ethics. I distinctly remember being taught the American Institute for Chemical Engineers Code of Ethics before completing my undergraduate degree in chemical engineering. One definition of religion, that shouldn’t be controversial in any way in your firm, is really just a particular belief system or worldview that an individual holds. Using that definition, everyone is religious in some way, even those who would describe themselves as atheists.

I’d like to argue that all three (values, morals, and ethics) are inseparably linked and foundational to our businesses, culture, and strategy. It is these pillars that allow us to even discuss decentralization and the creation of an innovation ecosystem. To begin, we will have to define the terms to ensure we are on the same intellectual footing. I’d also be remiss if I failed to acknowledge how/why these terms often get conflated with theistic thought. With that, let’s begin.

■ **Values.** I typically define these for our clients as the unwavering

See PHIL KEIL, page 2

ON THE MOVE

THE AUSTIN COMPANY WELCOMES DAVID W. WATSON, BAKING AND SNACK INDUSTRY EXPERT, TO THE TEAM The Austin Company is proud to announce David Watson as its baking and snack engineering SME.

Watson brings to Austin more than 37 years in the food industry, having begun his career as a project engineer at Pepperidge Farm. Most recently, Watson served as vice president, Engineering-International, Pepperidge Farm and Packaging Systems at Campbell Soup Company.

“Dave has been part of our family for many years as a client in his prior role as vice president engineering at Campbell Soup Company,” stated Brandon Davis, vice president and general manager of Austin’s Eastern Operations. “We are overjoyed to have him join our family, now as a team member bringing deep process and operations skills, as well as the owner’s perspective to our work.”

Watson earned his bachelor’s degree in

mechanical engineering from Drexel University and his MBA at Saint Joseph’s University. He has served on the American Society of Baking Executive Committee, the Bakery Equipment Manufacturers Association BIF Committee, the American Baker’s Association, and is currently on committees for the International Baking Industry Exposition.

“I have known Dave for a long time, and The Austin Company is fortunate to have him join our team,” said company president Mike Pierce. “His breadth of experience in the baking industry will position us to better serve our existing – and future – clients in this market.”

The Austin Company, a design-build firm headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, offers a comprehensive portfolio of services for commercial and industrial companies throughout North America. Services include site location, planning, architectural design, engineering, construction, facility maintenance, and operations improvement consulting.

PHIL KEIL, from page 1

principles that are necessary to infuse your culture with purpose. More basically, they are the foundation of a person’s ability to judge between right and wrong. They are a deep-rooted system of beliefs and have intrinsic worth but are not universally accepted. It is a system that allows each individual to determine what should or shouldn’t be. These fundamental beliefs are the barometer that guides a person’s decisions. There are also various levels including individual, firm, and societal values. I strongly encourage all leaders to reflect on their own individual values, but for the purpose of this conversation, let’s focus on the firm. Of course, if the two are not in harmony, then there is a poor fit with your organization which can cause additional challenges.

- **Morals.** Morality is formed out of our values. Morals are the actual system of beliefs that emerge from a person’s core values. These are specific and context-driven rules that govern a person’s behavior. Since this system of beliefs is tailored to an individual or firm, they are subjective, and this is where we see moral relativism injected into the discussion. Meaning, each firm’s morals may be different relative to any other firm. The bridge to traditional or theistic religion is in the definition of objective morality and universal truths that are predicated upon some form of higher power. Morality, in and of itself, however, is subjective and worth inculcating and discussing in our businesses.
- **Ethics.** Finally, we have the vehicle that allows us to act out our morality. Ethics are what enact the moral system that we’ve developed. A person, therefore, can be said to be ethical by acting in accordance to one’s morality. Hence why codes of ethics are always discussed as actions such as “perform professional services only in areas of their competence” or “conduct themselves in a fair, honorable, and respectful manner” to borrow once again from AIChE.

Careful thought and consideration should be instituted when defining your own firm’s value, moral, and ethical framework. I may make a more thorough defense of the importance of this framework for your firm at a later date, but to summarize, it is of paramount importance to creating your culture and long-term success. If you accept the premise at the outset of this article, that of a decentralized system and a required innovation ecosystem, then this foundation is the first step. As technology, particularly AI, develops at the momentous pace it is, I would even argue, particularly for larger organizations, that an ethics/values committee be established to keep you accountable and aligned in the “face” of a nameless, faceless machine learning platform. ▀

PHIL KEIL is director of strategic services at Zweig Group. Contact him at pkeil@zweiggroup.com.



zweig group

The Principals Academy

ZWEIG GROUP’S FLAGSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FIRM LEADERS

Elevate your ability to lead and grow your firm at this impactful two-day program designed to inspire and inform existing and emerging firm leaders in key areas such as: leadership, financial management, recruiting, marketing/business development, and project management.

REGISTER TODAY

<http://bit.ly/PrincipalsAcademy>

THE ZWEIG LETTER

1200 North College Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703

Chad Clinehens | Publisher
cclinehens@zweiggroup.com

Sara Parkman | Senior Editor & Designer
sparkman@zweiggroup.com

Christina Zweig | Contributing Editor
czweig@zweiggroup.com

Liisa Andreassen | Correspondent
landreassen@zweiggroup.com

Tel: 800-466-6275

Fax: 800-842-1560

Email: info@zweiggroup.com

Online: thezweigletter.com

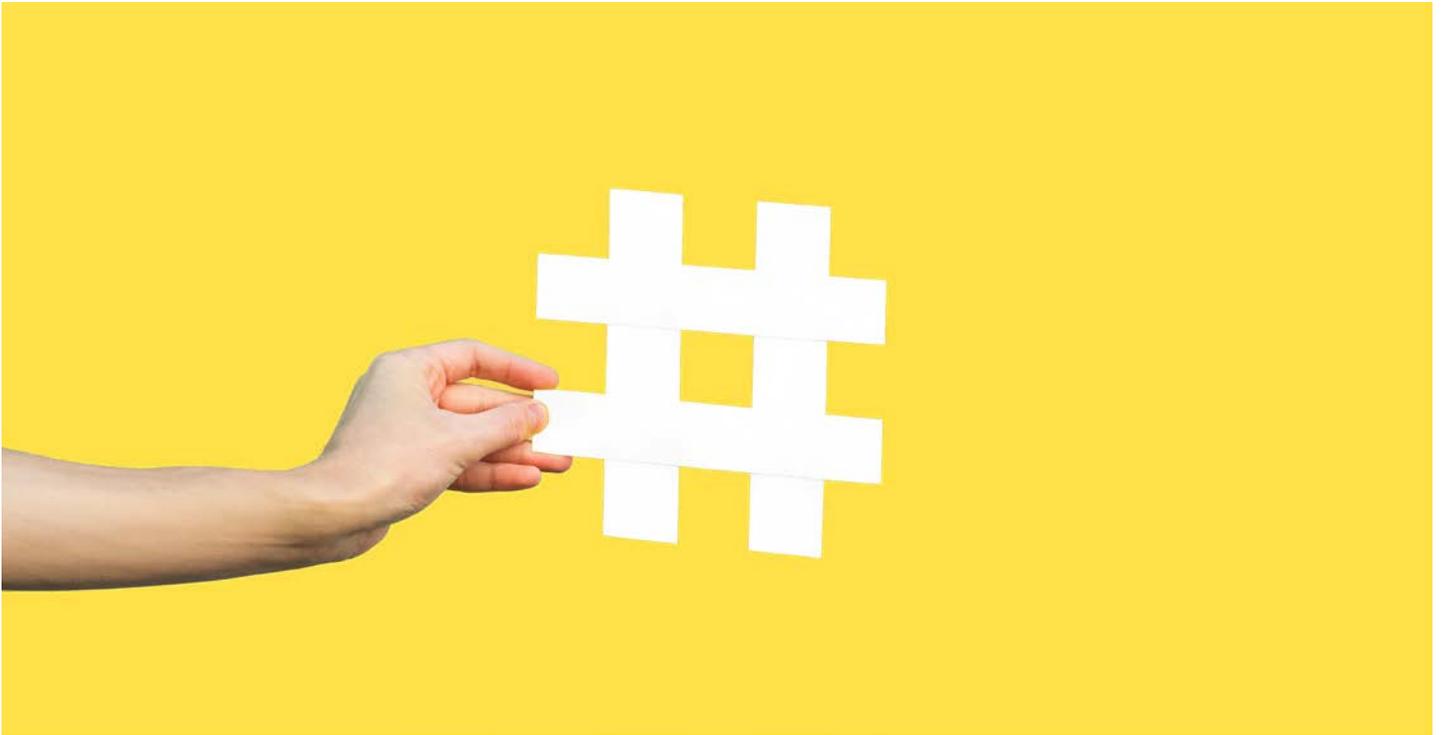
Twitter: twitter.com/zweigletter

Facebook: facebook.com/thezweigletter

Published continuously since 1992 by Zweig Group, Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA. ISSN 1068-1310.

Issued weekly (48 issues/year) \$250 for one-year print subscription; free electronic subscription at thezweigletter.com/subscribe

© Copyright 2020, Zweig Group. All rights reserved.



Forgotten fundamentals of marketing

“The companies that really make an effort to understand and embrace basic marketing knowledge will continue to grow and prosper regardless of the markets they serve.”



Mark
Zweig

I have always said that the A/E business is a good 10-15 years behind the rest of American industry when it comes to marketing. But what I have discovered in the 15 years since the first time we sold the company (Zweig White) and I started teaching entrepreneurship at the Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas is that many privately-held companies of all types have plenty of room to improve their marketing and selling strategies, processes, and activities – not just architecture and engineering firms.

Why are we so behind? Besides the fact that many firms still don't employ full-time, professionally-trained marketing staff, it's the owners who are the problem. They don't realize marketing is both an art and a science – and that it is a discipline with a body of knowledge just like whatever their own discipline base is. They also don't really believe “it” (marketing) works to improve their business so they see spending money on it as a cost to be minimized rather than an investment in their company's future ability to sustain itself. In their minds, the probability of their success as a business lies more in the economy overall and that of the specific markets or industries they serve.

This is a dangerous belief, as many signs point to

potential slowdowns coming in many markets. If management thinks there's little they can do to avoid workload declines in their firms it will be a self-fulfilling prophecy. They will decline. And any company with owners who think they can manage that decline and stay profitable are kidding themselves. It is rare to see a firm in this business that cuts costs and shrinks quickly enough to stay profitable through significant revenue declines.

It seems to me nearly everyone who owns or manages an A/E firm could benefit from a basic “Introduction to Marketing” course at their local business school. It certainly could provide some foundational knowledge about marketing that would impact everything they do.

See MARK ZWEIG, page 4



TRANSACTIONS

T. BAKER SMITH WELCOMES 2020 WITH A TEXAS-BASED ACQUISITION

T. Baker Smith has acquired Naismith Marine Services, Inc., a hydrographic, geophysical surveying, and environmental firm based in Rockport, Texas. NMS specializes in bathymetry, underwater inspection and imaging, oyster and seagrass surveys, and wetland delineations. TBS is a multi-disciplinary firm serving the public works, land development, industrial, pipeline and exploration and production market sectors primarily in Texas and Louisiana. This acquisition is part of TBS' overall growth strategy, enhancing its Texas capabilities and further building on over 20 years of providing client service in the Houston and San Antonio markets.

With additional engineers, surveyors, and technical staff joining TBS from NMS, the strength of combining resources expands TBS' ability to provide responsive, cutting-

edge solutions to a collective customer base in coastal South Texas.

Kenneth Wm. Smith, PE, PLS, FACEC, CEO of TBS stated, "The synergy that comes from TBS' first acquisition opens a myriad of client service opportunities in our focus markets in Texas. We're excited about our ability to now provide a broader array of engineering, surveying and environmental solutions delivered by local experts in the Texas Gulf Coast Region."

Jim Naismith, founder of Naismith Marine Services, will continue to lead the Corpus Christi area-based office and is charged with growing and expanding the local office. Naismith stated, "Naismith is well-known for bringing innovative, efficient solutions to our clients. As a part of TBS, our local office now brings exceptional depth of expertise, allowing us to deliver comprehensive, integrated

solutions and service to our South Texas coastal clients."

T. Baker Smith is a market-driven, professional engineering, surveying, and environmental firm servicing the Gulf Coast region since 1913. Utilizing leading edge technology and cultivating our associates' talents, TBS integrates services to provide customized solutions to clients' challenges. As trusted advisors, we work on meaningful projects that improve, enhance and protect our communities.

A pioneer in groundbreaking hydrographic and geophysical surveying and environmental solutions, Naismith Marine Services has been a thriving business for the past 12 years. NMS has an exceptional reputation serving coastal, ports, industry, university, state and area-county clients through their innovative, efficient approach to problem solving.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 3

Here are some crucial marketing fundamentals many of our readers could benefit from:

- 1) Marketing is wide-ranging and affects everything the firm does.** The "marketing mix" or recipe for any firm is made up of varying amounts of "the four Ps" – product (what we are actually selling – in our case, service), place (where we provide services), promotion (activities to promote our services – what most people think of when they think of marketing), and price (what we charge for what we do). A/E firms typically cut out their marketing experts (if they have them) from all decisions other than promotion. That is a mistake that can quickly drive the firm off-course. Marketing considerations should be a part of nearly all decision making.
- 2) Who are you trying to sell to?** This is so important. Just having great service capabilities does not mean clients will beat a path to your door. Specialization is the rule today. Clients of A/E firms want service providers with experience solving specific types of problems in organizations like their own. The great news about knowing this is it makes it easy for you in most cases to determine who these potential clients are, and to identify who in those organizations can hire you. Build that list. Nothing will happen until you do, other than you reacting to whatever clients happen to come through your door.
- 3) What are their needs?** We all too often assume we know what the client really wants. Then, when they try to tell us, we ignore it and do things the same way we have always done them. That is analogous to the contractors who build from our plans ignoring those plans and instead doing what they "always do" or did on their last job. We don't like it when that happens. It takes a lot of digging and people who are open to listening and learning to get at a client's real needs. But you will never figure them out if you don't make a serious effort to do so! And once you know these needs, act on that knowledge and keep making efforts to find new needs because times do change. Just because you knew your clients' needs last year doesn't mean you know them today. You may even figure out they need help with services you don't currently provide.
- 4) Who is best to sell it/do it for them?** This is so important.

Who do we think is best equipped to successfully sell work to and serve a given client. Even retail automobile dealers understand that they have to match prospects with the salespeople who are most likely to be able to strike up a relationship with them, yet A/E firms too often take a "one size fits all approach" and if a client has a need for mechanical engineering services, whomever is in charge of that automatically "gets" that client. It's crazy. You have to match personalities. It takes some management and ability to generalize (stereotype – sorry) quickly to do this effectively.

"Nearly everyone who owns or manages an A/E firm could benefit from a basic 'Introduction to Marketing' course at their local business school. It certainly could provide some foundational knowledge about marketing that would impact everything they do."

- 5) What are the best ways to reach them?** Not everyone receives information the same way. That is why there are so many different social media platforms – each is different and appeals to a different audience. It is also why we have telephones we can make calls on, as well as email, texts, tradeshow, personal meetings, professional or trade association meetings, blogging, print media, YouTube video, and a million other options for getting content out to clients and potential clients. As A/E marketers, we need to employ **EVERY** one of these methods to reach our targets if we want to maximize our chances of success.

One thing I know for sure: The companies that really make an effort to understand and embrace basic marketing knowledge, and that implement these concepts firm-wide will continue to grow and prosper regardless of the markets they serve. ▀

MARK ZWEIG is Zweig Group's chairman and founder. Contact him at mzweig@zweiggroup.com.



2020 Seminar Calendar

Learning is your competitive advantage. Zweig Group is your life-long learning provider of choice.



FEBRUARY

- 26 Elevate Your Recruiting & Retention Strategy
Seattle, Washington
- 27 Elevate Learning Series: The Basics of Business Development
Seattle, Washington

MARCH

- 12-13 The Principals Academy
Dallas, Texas
- 26 Elevate Learning Series: The Basics of Business Development
Washington, DC

APRIL

- 2-3 CEO Roundtable Retreat
Atlanta, Georgia
- 8-9 Elevating Doer-Sellers: Intensive 2 Day Workshop
San Francisco, California
- 23 Elevate Your Recruiting & Retention Strategy
Toronto, Canada
- 30 Elevate Learning Series: Communicating With Confidence
Phoenix, Arizona

MAY

- 19 Project Management for AEC Professionals
Tampa, Florida
- 21 Elevate Learning Series: Communicating With Confidence
Detroit, Michigan
- 27 Learn The Language of Business: Financial Management
Dallas, Texas

JUNE

- 11-12 The Principals Academy
Detroit, Michigan
- 17-18 Leadership Skills for AEC Professionals
Seattle, Washington
- 24 Elevate Your Recruiting & Retention Strategy
Denver, CO
- 25 Elevate Learning Series: The Power of Positioning
Denver, CO

JULY

- 14 Learn The Language of Business: Financial Management
Chicago, Illinois
- 23-24 The Principals Academy
Portland, Oregon
- 30 The Power of Positioning
Washington, DC

AUGUST

- 5-6 Elevating Doer-Sellers: Intensive 2 Day Workshop
Chicago, Illinois
- 12 Project Management for AEC Professionals
Dallas, Texas
- 20 Elevate Your Recruiting & Retention Strategy
Orlando, Florida
- 27 Elevate Learning Series: Building a Persuasive, Powerful, Pursuit Strategy
Vancouver, Canada

SEPTEMBER

- 24 Elevate Learning Series: Building a Persuasive, Powerful, Pursuit Strategy
Raleigh, North Carolina
- 30-2 2020 ELEVATE AEC Conference & Awards Gala
Denver, Colorado

OCTOBER

- 14 Project Management for AEC Professionals
Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 21 Elevate Learning Series: Creating a Championship Interview Team
Los Angeles, California
- 22 Elevate Your Recruiting & Retention Strategy
Los Angeles, California

NOVEMBER

- 5-6 The Principals Academy
Phoenix, Arizona
- 12-13 CEO Roundtable Retreat
Napa, California
- 19 Elevate Learning Series: Creating a Championship Interview Team
Nashville, Tennessee

Have questions?

Want more information?

Interested in In-House Training?

Contact:
events@zweiggroup.com

ELEVATE THE INDUSTRY
800.466.6275
zweiggroup.com

Go to shop.zweiggroup.com/collections/seminars to register.

Zweig Group is an approved provider by the American Institute of Architects, SMPS, and ACEC.

PROFILE



Family legacy: Brian DiSabatino

CEO of EDiS (Wilmington, DE), a fifth generation family-owned firm that has been thriving in the same region for more than a century.

By SARA PARKMAN
Senior Editor

DiSabatino has been with EDiS since 1987. Since then, he has worked in multiple areas of the company including cost estimating, accounting and systems development, business development, project management, and operations management. He has been a co-founder of financial institutions, served in advisory roles for multinational corporations, and is well versed in translating business strategy into facility design and construction. As CEO, DiSabatino's No. 1 priority is making sure the people in his care are safe, happy, and fulfilled.

A CONVERSATION WITH BRIAN DISABATINO.

The Zweig Letter: EDiS has been thriving in the same region for more than a century. What would you say has contributed to this longevity and success?

Brian DiSabatino: There has been a century-long tradition that our contribution is more important than our self. When our founder Ernesto DiSabatino (notice the EDiS in his name?) came to America he quickly took a central

role in the community to improve the quality of life for his fellow immigrants through the dignity of construction. As a result, historic landmarks were left in his wake and families thrived. Today we remain equally focused on building in a manner that honors this tradition, leaves a legacy of great buildings, and focuses on the importance of the person. We are blessed that this approach has helped sustain us since 1908.

TZL: What are the three to four key business performance indicators that you watch most carefully? Do you share that information with your staff?

BD: The first and most important indicator is the health of the persons in my care. Aside from their safety, our No. 1 priority, we have an obligation to make sure each person is finding our workplace a place to be fulfilled and are willing to treat each other and our customers with the same care. Profit and growth flow through this indicator or get bound up by its lack. We measure this indicator in surveys and through personal interaction. Secondly, our

commitment to consistency and process. We measure our key processes to make sure they are being followed and adjust them to keep them relevant. Most profit and growth loss can be traced to a degradation of these processes. Third is the combination of margin and net profit, relative to the market. If we can keep our margins and profit healthier than the market, it is an indicator that we are being relevant to our customers, good stewards of our finances, and lifting each other as people.

“We are the stewards of a tradition and brand that was created and cared for by our predecessors. We have an obligation to these folks to think long-term and make decisions that honor their contributions and inspire others into the future.”

TZL: How much time do you spend working “in the business” rather than “on the business?”

BD: As CEO, the most difficult shift was making the transition to work “on the business.” This required me to improve my clarity of vision, clarity of instruction, hire the best and brightest, and trust them. Therefore, the vast majority of my time is spent on working “on the business,” but allows me the opportunity to dive down and get involved in details and the team needs me. My role is to make sure I am spotting issues with the market or the organization that will propel us or put us at risk, in the future. Ultimately, I’ve got to resolve these issues in advance of our arrival.

TZL: What role does your family play in your career? Are work and family separate, or is there overlap?

BD: Work and family are intertwined for me. As a business owner and now as CEO it is hard to have the kind of separation that others enjoy. As it is our responsibility to care for our own kin, we also bear the responsibility of all families within the organization. Therefore, our jobs are 24/7, 365 days a year. That issue can create an incredible burden on the family and must be balanced by purposeful separation from the business during family time. I can’t claim that I’ve succeeded in this category

but can claim that I have been blessed with three very supportive children.

TZL: You co-founded a charity, 22in22, with your oldest son. Can you tell us a little bit about the charity and what it means to you?

BD: When my son came to me and wanted to serve his country, I quickly learned about the sacrifice of our military and their families. On average, 22 veterans and active duty military are lost to suicide every day. Together, we were acquainted with the epidemic of veteran suicide and decided to take a leadership role to help stop it. We found by establishing the 22in22 brand we could teach people about the 22 per day statistic while giving them a way to help. Suddenly we found ourselves in the middle of a national movement and in the midst of amazing volunteers who we now call family.

TZL: Artificial intelligence and machine learning are potential disruptors across all industries. Is your firm exploring how to incorporate these technologies into providing improved services for clients?

BD: I don’t like the word disruptor; I prefer accelerator. It is more focused on the positive. For 75 percent of my career I was frustrated that we could not move the needle on production and value to the customer fast enough. So, when two things occurred, we jumped on them. First was the environmental movement. I believe LEED and other environmental topics facilitated the concept of radical change that would follow with AI. Environmentalism taught the industry how to accept a 90-degree turn in approach. We have leapt into AI, making a complete commitment to using BIM, FIM (facility information management), and augmented reality to build better buildings, lower costs, and create a safer environment on our jobsites. We plan to lead.

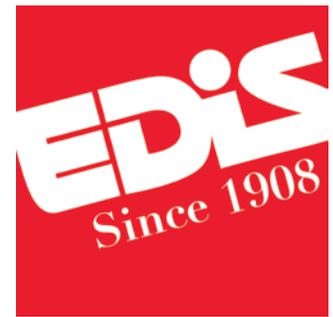
TZL: What, if anything, are you doing to protect your firm from a potential economic slowdown in the future?

BD: We can’t prevent the eventual downturn, so it is our job to build better buildings and relationships with our customers so that we can weather the storm better than others.

TZL: You were VP Strategy & Marketing at EDiS for more than a decade. What’s the most valuable piece of marketing advice you can give your peers?

BD: As marketers it is important

See FAMILY LEGACY, page 8



HEADQUARTERS: Wilmington, DE

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 85

YEAR FOUNDED: 1908

OFFICE LOCATIONS:

- Wilmington, DE
- Lewes, DE
- Malvern, PA

SERVICES:

Plan:

- Site selection
- Entitlement and permitting
- Facility financial analysis
- Pre-leasing advice, test-fitting and project budgeting
- Lease negotiation management
- Design management
- Sustainability
- Budgeting
- Scheduling
- Quality assurance
- Procurement/bidding

Build:

- Quality control
- Subcontractor management
- Schedule management
- Cost management
- Safety management
- Closeout and commissioning management

Operate:

- Facilities management
- Tenant improvement budgeting
- Minor capital improvements

MISSION: Help our customers focus on what they do best while we provide knowledge and experience with what we know best.

to understand the need for authenticity, empathy, connection, and the anchor. The marketer must only promote what they are, not what they wish they were. New and current listeners (customers, employees, curious bystanders) are wired to detect authenticity and crave honesty in an environment of distractions. The listener needs not only to know you understand them and can match your message to their situation, but needs you to communicate in a manner they can understand very quickly. Their minds are very busy. They need you to connect with them as people, not as buyers, knowing that you will care about them after the sale. And the message must sink in and be retained, even if repetition is required, or it will be substituted with other messages.

TZL: It is often said that people leave managers, not companies. What are you doing to ensure that your line leadership are great people managers?

BD: First, I need to demonstrate this myself. The organization can't deliver on a philosophy inconsistent with one that I practice. So, my hope is that I deliver empathy, care, compassion, and vision to my direct reports. This doesn't mean that I can't drive high standards, quite the opposite. When you surround yourself with the right people and demonstrate that you are sincere in caring for them, they can reach new limits. We overtly discuss leadership topics in our organization, celebrate great examples, and address inconsistencies.

TZL: How are you balancing investment in the next generation – which is at an all-time high – with rewards for tenured staff?

BD: This has always been a challenge but seems heightened as investments in development have increased. Tenured staff need to see the next generation as the reward, these two topics should not compete with each other. The wisdom and energy of the next generation is quite exciting and new to the industry.

TZL: EDiS is a fifth-generation family-owned company. What did you learn growing up in the business?

BD: EDiS is bigger than me as an individual. As an owner of a company, often one can think that the company belongs to them. Our situation is different. We are the stewards of a tradition and brand that was created and cared for by our predecessors. We have an obligation to these folks to think long-term and make decisions that honor their contributions and inspire others into the future.

TZL: How do you handle a long-term principal who is resting on his or her laurels? What effect does a low performing, entitled principal or department head have on firm morale?

BD: This is one of the hardest topics to deal with, but the most important. A non-performer at the lower levels of an organization chart can be inconsequential, but a non-performing leader can be a cancer and needs to be dealt with. Friendships, fear of consequences, and fear of failure to resolve often cause paralysis. But not dealing

with this issue is negligence on the part of the CEO and unfortunately comes with the territory. That being said, we should not ignore the fact that many times the situation can improve, and we often lose sight of the positive impacts of improvement or, regrettably, separation. But leaving non-performance in place is not acceptable.

TZL: They say failure is a great teacher. What's the biggest lesson you've had to learn the hard way?

BD: The biggest struggle I had (and probably have) is the notion that everyone knows what is on my mind, sees the vision, buys in, and is working in sync. The idea of leadership through osmosis is a common fault and needs to be avoided. This pitfall puts a lot of emphasis of leadership through relationship building because as a leader, we must connect one-on-one with others to ensure the collaboration, vision, buy-in, and execution are working.

TZL: Research shows that PMs are overworked, understaffed, and that many firms do not have formal training programs for PMs. What is your firm doing to support its PMs?

BD: This was a blind spot of ours, years ago. When we began to see the stress and lose talented people because of it, we implemented a few changes. First, we better staffed our projects. This meant losing some because of price, but they ended up being projects that would not have appreciated the value we added anyway. Secondly, we hired a robust group of project engineers who could lighten the load of our senior staff while learning their way into the PM ranks. Lastly, we adjusted our work environment to focus on personal health, wellness, and fulfillment in new ways.

TZL: Diversity and inclusion are lacking. What steps are you taking to address the issue?

BD: We don't just keep the door wide-open; we make a conscious effort to recruit from a diverse pool. Recognizing that this is difficult, we have spent a significant amount of time extolling the virtues of our industry in schools where kids from disadvantaged backgrounds need role models.

TZL: You co-founded the town of Whitehall, Delaware. How did this come about? What was your vision for the town?

BD: We were approached by a philanthropic foundation that owned a significant amount of land. Wanting to convert the asset into cash, they knew they had a responsibility not to let it fall into the hands of careless developers. We established a vision that would hopefully change real estate patterns and sprawl by laying the groundwork to create a new "place." We thoughtfully studied and emulated the planning models of historic towns in Delaware, the United States, and around the world, places that people visit and adore. Our vision is to create a vibrant, resilient, and charming place by paying homage to the person and connecting people with each other and their surroundings. ▀

OPINION



Show your value

Don't be afraid to charge what you're worth. You want clients who value your relationship and appreciate your talent.



Lindsay
Young

“Price is what you pay, value is what you receive.” Every day, as business owners, we must show our value. We show our value to our clients, employees, industry partners, family, and friends. I recently read an article that talked about getting paid for what you are worth. Regardless of industry, every business owner wonders if their price is too high, too low, or just right. As an architect, engineer, or contractor, you have years of experience and knowledge to provide to your clients and should be compensated well for it. Your services shouldn't be discounted. EVER. Your services, talent, and experience are worth every penny you charge to your clients.

If something takes you 30 minutes today, but it once took you three hours, your years of experience have made that a much easier task – hence why you have different hourly rates depending on positions/years of experience. You've learned how to be more productive, but you've also seen that problem many times before so you can apply what you already know. It doesn't require spending hours researching, asking around, or trial and error. You just know the solution to the problem. You complete the task or request of the client almost by routine. Your research time and experience has saved your clients time, money, and headaches, which is exactly what your clients want.

But how do you actually show value to your clients? There are five crucial things involved in this process:

1) Education. As a professional services provider, you might find it hard to justify (to yourself and to your clients) your lump sum fee or your hourly rates. First, educate your clients about what this fee includes and the experience the team brings to the project. It's part of the business development cycle that the client sees the value in the services you provide. For most owners, their projects are no small sum of money and likely the biggest investment they will make in their business. They need to

See LINDSAY YOUNG, page 10



ON THE MOVE

NEW HAMPSHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL FIRM GEOLNSIGHT HIRES PFAS TRAILBLAZER NIKKI DELUDE ROY AS NEW VICE PRESIDENT

Geolnsight, Inc., a leading New England-based firm providing strategy in environmental, engineering, water resource, and environmental health and safety services, announced that it has named Nikki Delude Roy as vice president.

Roy said, "Geolnsight is a group of technically excellent professionals. I am thrilled at the opportunity to combine my technical expertise, local network, and organizational leadership experience to continue driving strategic growth at Geolnsight. The culture of the firm – which combines strategic and technical thinking with genuine commitment to personal service – is a great fit for me and I am excited to help grow and lead this team."

President, Brian Kisiel said, "Nikki truly embodies our philosophy. I am looking forward to seeing her leadership bring Geolnsight to new heights."

With more than 15 years of technical and leadership experience, Roy is recognized in

New England and beyond for her strategic approach to complex environmental challenges. Her consulting expertise has focused on site assessment and remediation projects throughout the United States for transportation, manufacturing, and waste sector clients. Prior to joining Geolnsight, Roy served Golder Associates as a Senior Consultant and New England and New York Group Leader.

Over the past few years, Roy has become an industry thought-leader through her work with emerging contaminants including per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances and her efforts to keep abreast of the evolving regulatory scene.

In addition to being involved in the regulatory, legal, and strategic components of several large projects where emerging contaminants were identified as chemicals of concern, Roy has also provided technical support to the New Hampshire Business and Industry Association during New Hampshire's development of PFAS legislation, where she received New Hampshire Business and Industry Association's "2018 Above and Beyond Award." Roy regularly

presents at local and national conferences (e.g., New Hampshire Air & Water Regulatory Conference, SWANA 2019 WasteCon, Transportation Research Board) on issues associated with emerging contaminants and co-authored a national article for the American Bar Association.

Jim Roche of New Hampshire Business and Industry Association says, "Nikki regularly shares valuable, technical expertise with her colleagues on the Business and Industry Association's Manufacturing & End Users Policy Committee. She was particularly helpful to us as we navigated public policy challenges surrounding regulation of emerging contaminants like PFAS. Geolnsight is gaining a knowledgeable, articulate, and approachable asset in Nikki. We look forward to her continued contributions to the Business and Industry Association."

Geolnsight is New England's leader for high-quality environmental strategy and engineering. Since 1993, Geolnsight's talented technical and strategic consultants are sought out for their personal and attentive approach.

LINDSAY YOUNG, from page 9

understand why your fee is what it is. (These are the factors that differentiate you from others.)

2) Proof. The second step to showing your value is to prove it. This can be done through providing testimonials, letters of recommendation, and references from your repeat, satisfied clients. You can talk all day long about how wonderful you are, but having your client hear someone else talk about how wonderful you are is much more effective! Word of mouth marketing is still the strongest form of marketing.

When you purchase a table at an event and invite clients and prospects, this is a great way to prove your value. At some point throughout the night, the prospect and client will be talking about your firm and the experience they had with you. Obviously, you have brought a client with whom you have a strong relationship, so they are going to sing your praises. This happens quite often, so be strategic when inviting clients and prospects to events. It can make a world of difference in your business development efforts.

3) Confidence. Be confident. This sounds so easy but if you waver or seem hesitant in what you are wanting, the client will see right through this. You must be confident in the fees you are requesting for your services. When you give them the proposal or fee structure, give the client time to comprehend it. Don't immediately assume they aren't going to pay that fee. Wait for them to respond. You don't want to be arrogant, but you want to be confident. No one wants to work with someone who rolls over at every negotiation tactic. You are worth what you charge, so don't let the fear of offending a client keep you from charging what you deserve.

4) Listen. Listening is part of showing your value, because it demonstrates that you care about the other person's opinion. You will also learn by listening to your client and asking good questions. If you listen, you'll understand what their hot buttons are and communicate the value you bring to the

project. You probably have clients that hire you because they like your work and your people. They don't haggle you over fees and rarely comment about your price. (Honestly, this might be the time to raise their fee.) Being a good listener helps in all aspects of life. Listen to your clients. They will tell you.

"Every business owner wonders if their price is too high, too low, or just right. As an architect, engineer, or contractor, you have years of experience and knowledge to provide to your clients and should be compensated well for it ... Your services, talent, and experience are worth every penny."

5) Walking away. You must be willing to walk away from a prospect or client that isn't willing to pay you what you are worth. That's very difficult but you must do it. We are all very fortunate right now with the amount of work architects, engineers, and contractors have, so you're probably turning away projects because you are too busy (not necessarily because of fee or price, although this should be a deciding factor when pursuing additional work).

Showing the value that you and your business have is instrumental in the success of your firm. Don't be afraid to charge what you are worth. You want clients who value your relationship and appreciate your talent. You've earned it and you're worth it! ▀

LINDSAY YOUNG is president and founder of nu marketing. She can be reached at lindsay@numarketingllc.com.



Leadership essentials

Learn the basics of leadership so you can decide if you're up to the task. If you are, assess your skills and improve where you can.



**Kyle
Cheerangie**

As a junior engineer I knew early on that I wanted to be a leader. However, I did not know the basics of leading others and how those qualities fit with my personality.

Here are some of the basics of leadership:

- 1) **Listen.** This is a basic discipline. All that is required is for you to stop talking. As an introvert, I was naturally a good listener. For others, this could be extremely difficult.
- 2) **Communicate.** This takes patience and the willingness to make yourself understood. Doing this in a group setting could be more difficult where the risk (embarrassment) outweighs the reward (being right). As younger engineers move into management they will have to gain confidence in their opinions. This should be done by becoming knowledgeable in the subjects important to the team.
- 3) **Simplify.** Simplifying complex tasks is a hallmark of an engineering leader. Being able to simplify the complex means you can teach those below you and inform those above you in a succinct manner. This is the most difficult of the four competencies to develop. Some engineers take longer than others to

“Doing an assessment of yourself in these four areas will help you understand how well-suited you may be to a leadership role.”

develop this, but it can be improved. One method for developing this skill is by summarizing to others what you took away from the conversation after being assigned something complex. Another option is to write out a technical process you perform in your own words.

- 4) **Check your ego.** Subordinating your ego is a cyclical, lifelong effort.

Certain aspects of leadership came naturally to me. For example, I was a natural at simplifying

See KYLE CHEERANGIE, page 12



ON THE MOVE

WARE MALCOMB'S TIFFANY ENGLISH TO SERVE AS PRESIDENT-ELECT 2020 & PRESIDENT 2021 OF COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE WOMEN NETWORK

Ware Malcomb, an award-winning international design firm, announced Tiffany English, principal of Ware Malcomb's San Diego offices, will serve as president-elect of the Commercial Real Estate Women Network for 2020 and president in 2021. In this global role, English will represent the membership of the premier business network dedicated to transforming the commercial real estate industry by advancing women globally. English was named to the post at the recent CREW Network Convention and Marketplace in Orlando, Florida.

English has been a member of the CREW Network since 2003 and most recently served on the Global Board of Directors. She has also served as a member of the Education Committee (2017), Industry Research Committee (2015), UCREW Committee (2013, 2014), and as President of the San Diego Chapter (2012, 2013). CREW Network was founded in 1989 to bring together women involved in the many aspects of commercial real estate to exchange information, develop business contacts and help each other succeed professionally. The organization provides support to its approximately 12,000 members worldwide through business networking, leadership development, industry research and career outreach.

"We are so proud of Tiffany and the global role she is taking on at CREW Network, in addition to maintaining her full-time responsibilities at Ware Malcomb," said Lawrence Armstrong, CEO of Ware Malcomb. "She is one of our firm's brightest stars and we know she will do a fantastic job in helping to advance the careers of women in commercial real estate across the country and beyond, just as she has done at Ware Malcomb."

English has more than 23 years of industry experience in commercial real estate design. She has overseen, designed and managed over five million square feet of projects for commercial real estate and Fortune 500 clients, ranging from small tenant improvements to large full-service build-to-suit projects.

She is also experienced in national account management.

Throughout her career, English has won a variety of industry awards. Most recently, she was recognized by The Daily Transcript as a 2019 Influential Woman Honoree and by Real Estate Forum as a 2019 Woman of Influence. Additional notable recognitions include the San Diego Business Journal's Most Influential Business Leaders List and Outstanding Women in Construction and Design, Real Estate Forum Southern California's Most Powerful Women in Commercial Real Estate, and the Connected Women of Influence "Women's Advocate of the Year. In addition, she has authored numerous industry articles published in trade and business journals.

Established in 1972, Ware Malcomb is an international design firm providing planning, architecture, interior design, branding, civil engineering and building measurement services to commercial real estate and corporate clients.

With office locations throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Panama, the firm specializes in the design of commercial office, corporate, industrial, science and technology, healthcare, retail, auto, public/educational facilities and renovation projects. Ware Malcomb is recognized as a Hot Firm and Best Firm to Work For by Zweig Group.

BOWTIE ENGINEERING NAMES MARIAH LINDSEY AS VP OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Bowtie Engineering, an electrical engineering/managed services consulting firm, announced today that Mariah Lindsey has been hired as the Atlanta-based firm's vice president of business development.

Lindsey has more than 20 years of business experience, including consulting engagements with AT&T and Stringer Literary Services. Most recently she was Commercial Account Manager for BMS CAT and before that was Director of Institutional Advancement for Gwinnett Technical College. Lindsey also taught at Georgia State University and Chattahoochee Technical College and owned her own interior design business for a number of years.

She graduated from Georgia State University with a bachelor's degree, has an master's degree from Grand Canyon University, and is a Ph.D. candidate in industrial/organizational psychology at Grand Canyon University.

At Bowtie, Lindsey will be tasked with expanding opportunities among Bowtie's global client list. According to Bowtie's CEO John Welch, Lindsey will focus on the firm's core services: Electrical power studies, electrical maintenance, electrical safety programs and electrical risk mitigation.

Welch describes Lindsey as a well credentialed leader, with award winning achievement and a consistent record of results in account management, sales/marketing initiatives and revenue generation. "With her on Bowtie's management team, we can focus better on our client's electrical services needs and on expanding Bowtie's brand influence in North America and other parts of the world," said Welch.

Using her project management skills and health care connections, Lindsey will market the firm's services initially to Facilities Maintenance industry marketing the firm services. Among the Engineering/Managed Services Lindsey will promote is Bowtie PPE, which includes arc rated flash suites, shock rated rubber gloves, fan and light hoods, insulated tools, arc rated hooded jackets, jackets and bibs, coveralls, and long fire-resistant coats. "Having the correct PPE and tools is critical today because of OSHA's ever-increasing fines against companies for electrical accidents," said Welch.

"Adding Lindsey to our management the shows Bowtie's commitment to reducing electrical risk in the workplace and to improving our assertiveness in the market," he said.

Bowtie Engineering is a solutions-based systems engineering/integrated consulting firm that specializes in electrical safety. The company, staffed by engineers and technicians trained in OSHA regulations and NFPA standards, is headquartered in metro Atlanta.

KYLE CHEERANGIE, from page 11

complex tasks and listening to others. However, two skills eluded me. I often let my ego override the end results I was seeking and I found it difficult to communicate in group settings.

Doing an assessment of yourself in these four areas will help you understand how well-suited you may be to a leadership role. Having others assess you on a scale of 1-10 will be an effective baseline for improvement. Ask several people you trust to assess you based on these four

"Ask several people you trust to assess you based on these four competencies, and do a weekly self-assessment of your performance in these areas."

competencies, and do a weekly self-assessment of your performance in these areas. ▀

KYLE CHEERANGIE is a project manager at HNTB Corporation, and is the founder and director of content for the blog [Engineered Journals](http://EngineeredJournals.com). He can be reached at kyle@engineeredjournals.com.