

Maintaining long-term relationships



Mark Zweig

They are essential to this business. Mark Zweig offers five pointers.

Regardless of their value to your business, the ability to maintain long-term relationships may have a greater impact on your overall quality of life than anything else. So it's worth considering how some people are able to do that when others seem to have problems with it.

Here are some observations:

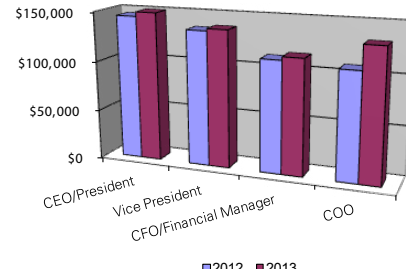
- 1) Being trustworthy is crucial.** If you can keep a secret and avoid ever violating someone else's trust, you are likely to be able to have a long-term relationship with them. Violate this trust – even once – and you will screw that up.
- 2) Doing what you say.** People who follow up on their promises don't let those they made the promises to down. This, too, leads to the ability to sustain a long-term relationship. This is not to say you can't have a long-term relationship as someone who doesn't do what they say they will BUT the quality of that relationship will be worse.
- 3) Initiate the contact to stay in touch.** Have you ever wondered how some relationships you have with others endured beyond what you ever would have predicted they would based on the person not being someone you would normally associate with? I'll bet the reason is the other person always initiates the contact to keep it alive. They made it happen. You can do the same.

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Some people are just more likely than others to offer help and assistance to others. That makes them people you feel indebted to and want to stay in touch with. This really works in business, too. Be helpful. Volunteer. Offer a hand. People will appreciate it and want to keep in touch.

TRENDLINES

Top up



The 2013 "Salary Survey of Architecture, Interior Design, and Landscape Architecture Firms" finds that firm leaders at leading architecture firms have seen slight increases in base salaries from 2012 to 2013. The median base salary for CEO/president/managing director increased from \$145,000 to \$149,552, for vice president from \$135,000 to \$137,275, and for CFO/financial manager, from \$112,000 to \$115,440. Chief operating officer's median base salary took the biggest jump, from \$108,000 last year to \$132,000 this year.

– Margot Suydam, Survey Manager

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A/E BUSINESS NEWS

ENGINEERING IN DEMAND: Over the past 90 days, organizations in the United States had more than 22,000 job ads available online for civil engineers, according to WANTED Analytics (www.wantedanalytics.com), a real-time business intelligence provider for the talent marketplace. Construction and infrastructure projects grew healthily during the past several months and brought an increased demand for engineering professionals, with jobs for civil engineers growing 16 percent compared to the same 90-day period in 2011, the most of any engineering occupation. Within civil engineering, some of the most commonly advertised job titles include civil engineer, structural engineer, project engineer, geotechnical engineer, and design engineer.

As engineering processes and techniques evolve, the skills that are required of potential candidates change, as well. The most commonly required skills in civil engineering job ads include project management, Autodesk AutoCAD, construction management, oral and written communication skills, Microsoft Office, Bentley Microstation, business development, and self-motivation. In addition to traditional engineering skills, such as project and construction management, there are several growing technologies that are frequently specified in job ads for this occupation. For example, experience with computer-aided design and specific programs, like Autodesk AutoCAD and Bentley Microstation, more commonly appears as job requirements.

The metropolitan areas where civil engineers were most in-demand were Houston, New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Denver. While employers in Houston and New York placed the highest number of job ads for this talent pool during the past 90 days, one of the highest year-over-year growth areas was actually Denver, where year-over-year hiring demand grew more than 80 percent.

As hiring demand for civil engineers continues and the talent gap for many STEM careers, the limited talent supply of potential candidates will create challenges for employers. According to the Hiring Scale, recruiters across the United States spend an average of six weeks advertising jobs and sourcing candidates for these positions. Each location will, however, experience a varying degree of difficulty when sourcing. Recruiters in Midland, Texas and Tulsa, Okla., are currently experiencing some of the most challenging overall recruiting conditions. Fierce competition among employers to source candidates and fill positions has emerged

in these two areas. In comparison, the Hiring Scale also shows that the best metropolitan areas for recruiting civil engineers are Boston and Seattle. Currently, hiring demand is lower in these areas, yet the talent supply remains larger. This means that recruiters are likely to fill jobs requiring e-commerce skills faster than average.

TRANSPORTATION NOT SO HOT: The U.S. transportation construction infrastructure market is expected to show modest growth in 2013, increasing three percent from \$126.5 billion to \$130.3 billion, according to the American Road and Transportation Builders Association's annual forecast. The association's chief economist, Alison Premo Black, released her findings during a Nov. 30 webinar for Wall Street analysts and construction industry executives.

Growth is expected in highway and street pavements, private work for driveways and parking lots, airport terminal and runway work, railroads, and port and waterway construction. ARTBA predicts the bridge market, which has shown substantial growth over the last 10 years, to remain flat.

The federal surface transportation program, combined with state and local government transportation investments, are the most significant drivers of the national transportation infrastructure construction market.

According to Black, the pavements market will be sluggish in 2013, growing 2.8 percent to \$58.4 billion. This includes \$47.7 billion in public and private investment in highways, roads and streets, and \$10.7 billion in largely private investments in parking lots, driveways and related structures.

With no new real federal money in the 2012 MAP-21 surface transportation law, still recovering state and local tax collections and modest new housing starts, the pavements market will be uneven across the nation. Pavement work is anticipated to be down in 25 states. Growth above a five percent range is expected in 19 states.

However, there are at least two developments related to MAP-21 that could lead to additional market activity in the short term and strengthen the market in 2013 and 2014, Black says.

First, the law's restructuring of the federal highway program offers state transportation departments more flexibility in their use of federal funds. This could lead to slightly increased investment in highway, bridge and pavement work above the forecast in some states. Second, MAP-21's expanded federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act loan program should also increase construction activity in some states.

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4) Give more than you take. Some people are just more likely than others to offer help and assistance to others. That makes them people you feel indebted to and want to stay in touch with. This really works in business, too. Be helpful. Volunteer. Offer a hand. People will appreciate it and want to keep in touch.

5) Make it easy. Be someone who answers your phone. Be someone who returns calls. Be the one who keeps everyone informed when you move or switch jobs. Make yourself visible, locatable, and accessible. This will help you sustain long-term relationships much more so over someone who won't do those things!

There's little in life more satisfying than pleasant interaction with those people you know and have known you for many years. Are you doing your part to facilitate these relationships – or not? ▲▲▲

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OUTLOOK

Economists weigh on 2013 prospects

They predict that billings and employment will continue to rise among A/E/P and environmental consulting firms, despite some hesitance.

By LIISA SULLIVAN
Correspondent

There are signs that the A/E industry is on the move. Kermit Baker, chief economist for the American Institute of Architects, says that the strong Architecture Billings Index (ABI) reports that came out in September and October are certainly indicators and deliver encouraging news.

SUSTAINED GROWTH ON THE HORIZON. The October ABI score was 52.8, up from the mark of 51.6 in September. This score reflects an increase in demand for design services (any score above 50 indicates an increase in billings). The new projects inquiry index was 59.4, compared to a mark of 57.3 the previous month.

“The numbers have been bouncing around a fair amount and we have not seen any sustained movements in either direction, but September was the second month in a row (with October being the third) that realized positive and strong numbers – in fact, they were the strongest number in a couple of years,” Baker says. “Hopefully, this is a bridge that we can build off of.”

Baker says that there are certainly some indicators out there that are all pointing to a sustained recovery in the A/E sector. They include:

1) Residential growth: “We are

“The strongest market is likely to be multifamily rental construction, followed by oil and gas work (from drilling to pipelines to various end-user categories) and manufacturing. Private colleges, as well as private investment in revenue-generating public-college structures, will also be strong.”



Kermit Baker,
Chief Economist,
AIA.

starting to see clear signs of firming in the residential sector; traditionally, we see the non-residential sector recovery after improvement on the residential side, but it is not working out that way this time,” he says. “The commercial side began turning around about a year ago. It did not experience the same

problems we saw on the residential side, such as foreclosures and stressed property sales. We are moving in the right direction. Sizes of homes are beginning to turn around and so are prices. The residential market was bouncing on its bottom for three or four years; that was not the case with commercial. We have been seeing good solid growth over the past year or so (after it hit bottom in 2010).”

2) Commercial growth: Out of the office, retail, hotel, manufacturing and distribution areas, likely hotel will come back strongly – it had the longest way to go back up. Healthcare and education growth are being attributed to baby boomers and the fact that education relies on state and local government funding. Until the fiscal situation improves, it’s been somewhat slow, but likely will be strong moving forward.

3) Construction: This too is starting to move in the right direction... slow, but starting to move.

AN ECONOMY ON THE MOVE. Kenneth Simonson has been chief economist for the Associated General Contractors of America, the leading national construction trade association, since 2001. He provides insight into the economy and what it implies for construction and related industries.



Kenneth
Simonson, Chief
Economist, AGC.

Simonson says that the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ employment report issued on Nov. 2 reflects that the seasonally adjusted level of payroll employment in the A/E sector each month from January 2002 through October 2012 clearly shows that employment has risen nearly every month since late 2011, but it remains well below the peak set in February 2008.

It also reveals that the percentage change in employment from the same month a year before shows that employment started rising year-over-year in February 2011, but the growth rate has stayed quite modest at 2- to 2.5 percent.

“Employment in architecture did not start growing on a year-over-year basis until February 2012, but has now done so for eight straight months through September (the latest month available for subsectors). Engineering employment turned positive in February 2011. But both series are growing at the same modest rate, 2- to 2.5%,” Simonson says.

Simonson adds that he expects to see continuing modest and uneven growth in A/E revenue and employment in 2013, with architecture in the lead and civil engineering lagging.

“The strongest market is likely to be multifamily rental construction, followed by oil and gas work (from drilling to pipelines to various end-user categories) and manufacturing,” Simonson says. “Private colleges, as well as private investment in revenue-generating public-college structures, will also be strong.”

PUBLIC CONCERN. Simonson is concerned that public funding, whether for transportation or water-related infrastructure, or for schools and public office buildings, will keep shrinking.

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NEWS

Infrastructure to dominate

Sandy impact means that in 2013 there will be a strong focus on rebuilding the nation's crumbling roads and bridges.

Microdesk, a leading provider of business and technology consulting services to help firms successfully plan, design, build and operate land and buildings, unveiled its annual list of the top five architecture, engineering and construction industry predictions for 2013 at Autodesk University in late November. Following a year in which the U.S. saw its long-neglected infrastructure system come to the forefront of national attention with natural disasters such as Hurricane Isaac and Superstorm Sandy, Microdesk predicts that in 2013 there will be a strong focus on implementing sustainable, forward-thinking solutions to rebuild the nation's crumbling roads and bridges.

The top five trends for in the New Year include:

1) Rebuilding America: Post-Sandy, technology provides tangible solutions for improvement. From levee breaches in New Orleans to the flooding of mass transit systems in New York City, it is clear U.S. infrastructure is weak. Rather than putting a band-aid over the problem, the industry must find a new approach to rebuilding that focuses on innovation and technology, and on being proactive not reactive. The tools are available, and in 2013 more firms will turn to visualization and collaborative design processes to strengthen the nation's vital infrastructure systems.

2) Regulatory compliance: Governments envisioning broader uses of BIM will prompt further adoption in the industry. Despite widespread availability of technology solutions, many firms still rely on old-fashioned design and building processes. To repair this broken, siloed workflow, in 2013 the industry will see greater requirements for BIM as more government agencies develop BIM-based workflows that add efficiencies to design review and regulatory compliance. This influence will trickle down to the rest of the industry and

inspire broader adoption at every level.

3) The "I" in BIM: Big data has been a hot topic in technology for several years, but in 2013, its influence will further infiltrate the design industry. BIM will make its way into field operation through purpose-built applications that allow designers and contractors to make informed decisions instantly and manage building data with the end uses of that information in mind. This will allow them to go beyond traditional project delivery by providing accurate, interconnected models that enable more efficient facility operations and maintenance.

4) Mobile and the design industry:

The use of mobile devices in design, construction and facilities management will become commonplace in 2013. In 2013, the use of mobile will become an industry standard – so much so that Microdesk believes this will be the last year mobile takes a spot in its predictions. Recent acquisitions by AEC software companies of social and mobile sharing technologies, including Socialcam and Qontext, further point toward this trend. In fact, the use of next-generation technologies will become "table stakes" in 2013 for any firm looking to enable collaboration, design and communication in the field.

5) Collaborative design in the cloud:

A focus on cloud technologies will facilitate improved workflows. In 2013, the industry will continue to leverage the cloud to make business more flexible and collaborative. Further adoption of cloud technologies that better enable the sharing and integration of data in the design and construction process will result in more efficient buildings, more streamlined construction processes and less waste.

"With several new advances in technology and processes on the horizon, the (design) industry is in a unique position to truly impact how we approach rebuilding our nation's infrastructure," said Michael DeLacey, president of Microdesk. "By continuing to leverage the technologies available – and embracing new technologies – the industry will set new precedents for what's possible in the design and building of roads, bridges, buildings and America's mass transit systems in 2013." ▀▀

RESOURCES

SALARY SURVEY: Salaries at leading U.S. architecture firms nationwide have fallen prey to the economic slowdown. And yet, the recent economic pain has not been felt equally!

Which positions have been most affected? Do you, or others in your firm, have good cause to feel shortchanged – or to feel fortunate?

The 2013 "Salary Survey of Architecture, Interior Design & Landscape Architecture Firms" is the most up-to-date and comprehensive compensation survey for architecture firms across the country.

Based on data from a broad sampling of architecture firms in the U.S. reporting salaries for all positions, this report is the gold standard for firm leaders looking to benchmark their own and their staff's compensation against their peers.

You'll get salary comparison tables for each position, broken down into demographic subgroups such as firm type, firm staff size and region of office so you can make reliable comparisons between your firm and others just like it.

Regions include: New England, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, North Central, South Central, Mountain, and Pacific. Descriptions and average years of experience are included for all titles in the survey.

Conducted in late 2012, the Salary Survey of Architecture, Interior Design & Landscape Architecture Firms gathered responses from more than 100 representative firms from all regions of the country to document base salaries of employees at those firms.

It's all here, laid out in an easy-to-read format for firms just like yours.

The Salary Survey will help you:

- Compare your staff's salaries to those in firms just like your own
- Find out what the normal salary range is for every type and level of position in architecture firms
- See how salaries change as firms grow in size and help you prepare for your own firm's future
- Evaluate salaries on a regional basis
- If you have offices in more than one state, see where employees are earning the most – and the least

For more information or to buy a copy, call 800-466-6275 or log on to www.zweigwhite.com/survey.php.

OUTLOOK

Looking forward: What's in store for 2013

Despite national and international economic worries, architects and engineers are optimistic.

By CHRISTINA ZWEIG
Contributing editor

Lack of work, stagnated salaries and increased competition have been some of the hallmarks of the design industry since 2008. Optimism of a turnaround is rising, however.

THE ZWEIG LETTER asked some people working in the A/E industry about some factors in their 2012 performance and what they expected for the upcoming year. The mood is mostly positive, although some firm leaders share only guarded optimism.



Tom Hendrick,
principal/
COO, Wallace
Engineering
Structural
Consultants, Inc.

Tom Hendrick, principal/COO at **Wallace Engineering Structural Consultants, Inc.** (Tulsa, OK), a 135-person structural and civil consulting firm, says, "I am an optimistic person. I expect 2013 to be better for us than 2012."

Bruce Sadler, partner, **Austin Brockenbrough & Associates, LLP** (Richmond, VA), a 41-person multidiscipline consulting engineering firm, offers cautious optimism.

"We had a great 2012 and we currently have a very healthy backlog," he says. "Therefore, we believe 2013 will be good, but we think overall revenues will be flat when compared to 2012."

For many firms, 2012 has been a tough year. Salary increases, often a sign of positive business performance and outlook, had no clear trends. Recent ZweigWhite salary surveys show little in the way of pay increases, especially in lower level positions. At many firms, upper management positions have continued to see decreases over the past four years. External as well as inter-

nal factors are to blame, placing many firms in a financial bind.

"I assume a lot of firms are similar to us," Hendrick says. "Revenue and profit margins have decreased the last couple of years. We anticipate they will bounce back. We have a lot of great people that we want to keep. In order to keep everyone, we have had to cut expenses and reduce salary increases."

Sadler says several factors are affecting salary adjustments.



Bruce Sadler,
Partner, Austin
Brockenbrough &
Associates, LLP.

"We have also had to keep salary increases very low for the past several years. Many of our clients hold us to the CPI or some similar index on long-term contracts, and thus we are forced to keep our increases in line with the government's measure of 'cost-of-living' increases," he says. "We have even had some clients tell us that they will not permit us to use the annual increases that were set by contract. In today's environment, you don't have much of a choice but to accept it."

ON THE HORIZON. New technology, predicted new projects and staff hires all great signs of hope for the industry going into 2013.

"We are excited about 2013," Sadler says. "Due to our success in 2012, we expect to add to our current staffing levels by around 10 percent by increasing our marketing/business development staff, acquiring a new service, and adding to our core technical staff."

Sadler's firm isn't the only one hoping to add staff in the upcoming year. According to WANTED Analytics (www.wantedanalytics.com), the leading source of real-time business intelligence for the talent marketplace, demand for engineers, especially civil engineers who are responsible for infrastructure projects, is growing.

In the report, construction and infra-

structure projects are shown to have grown during the past several months, bringing an increased demand for engineering professionals. Jobs for civil engineers grew the most of any engineering occupation at 16 percent in 2012, compared to the same 90-day period in 2011 (see related story on page 2).

Hendrick hopes to add more work by expanding into different sectors.

"We are a structural and civil engineering firm that works primarily in the architectural building world. We hope to add some stone bridge work and more industrial building work in 2013," he says.

It's also no surprise that technology continues to make inroads in the design industry in 2013.

"We expect to use BIM a lot more with our projects. We also plan to be the prime on some design-build projects," Sadler says.

OTHER SIGNS. Many organizations report some favorable economic signs. According to the AIA, firms have reported improving business conditions during the second half of the year with the ABI reaching 52.8 in October. One year ago, the ABI was a dismal 47.3.

Lawrence Yun, economist for The National Association of Realtors, reports that housing starts reached an 894,000 annualized unit pace in October, the highest in over four years, and up 42 percent from one year ago. The National Association of Home Builders also reports a continued upward trend in multifamily production, with October starts in buildings with five or more apartments at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 285,000, up 10 percent from September and up 63 percent from one year ago.

Overall, Hendrick says, "The ABI has been positive three months in a row. That is a good sign. The housing market seems to be headed in the right direction. With new home building comes new roads, new utilities, and other new commercial buildings. I expect things to start to turn around in 2013." ■▲

Do you read your contracts?



William Quatman

If you don't, tough luck. The burden is on you.

A large part of my job includes reviewing contracts for our company. More and more, it seems, the game of risk shifting is played by lawyers whose contracts slide project risks across the table. The key is to spot these risks, evaluate them, and attempt to reach a reasonable allocation of risk. So what if you miss something in the contract? Or don't read it fully? Or don't understand it but sign anyway? Surely a court will let you off the hook, right? Nope. The general rule is that when a person with the capacity of reading and understanding a contract signs it, in the absence of fraud, he or she is bound to it, and barred from complaining the terms are contrary to their intent or understanding. *Larsen v. Johannes*, 7 Cal. App.3d 491 (Cal.App. 1970).

We've all heard the phrase, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse," and the same applies to contracts. If you fail to read it, or understand it, you have no excuse. I once tried a case in which a subcontractor refused to arbitrate, despite signing a contract with such a clause. On the witness stand, the defiant sub admitted he had read the contract, saw the arbitration clause, and signed the subcontract without objection. "But I did not agree to it!" the sub testified. The startled judge turned to the witness and said, "Sir, if you don't agree to something, you have to let the other side know!" Obviously my client won and the sub was ordered to arbitrate.

In a 1999 Illinois case the court scolded a plaintiff who claimed she did not read the document she signed. "(The) argument that she didn't pay much attention to what she was signing and shouldn't be held to its terms, has a familiar ring. People who sign contracts containing clauses that in retrospect prove disadvantageous often say that they didn't read the fine print. But these arguments never go anywhere. People are free to sign legal documents

without reading them, but the documents are binding whether read or not." *Novitsky v. American Consulting Engineers, L.L.C.*, 196 F.3d 699 (7th Cir. 1999). The court noted that the woman had an opportunity to read the contract, "and, if she wanted, to obtain professional advice on the subject." Ignorance is no excuse.

The Uniform Commercial Code gives only limited reasons to void a contract. Those include: 1) "infancy" (normally being under age 18); 2) duress; 3) lack of legal capacity; 4) illegality of the transaction; or, 5) fraud that induced the person to sign "with neither knowledge nor reasonable opportunity to learn of its character or its essential terms." (U.C.C. § 3-305.) But unless you can fit snugly within one of these exceptions, you are likely stuck with what you sign, perhaps even if you don't speak English! Case in point is a 2006 case in which a cruise line passenger was injured but his cruise ticket required any suit to be filed in Miami. The passenger, a 67-year-old Russian émigré who did not read, speak, or understand English, filed suit in New Jersey. His wife did not read the ticket, and he had no knowledge of limits on where suits could be filed. The court rejected his argument, claiming the passenger and his wife had time to read over the terms and conditions, or to seek advice, but did not. *Finkelshtein v. Carnival Cruise Lines*, 2006 WL 1492469 (N.J. Super.A.D. 2006). Tough law.

How about fraud? Well, it better be pretty convincing, and it's a high hurdle to clear in court. To make out a claim of fraudulent inducement, persons must prove fraud "so fundamental that they were deceived as to the basic character of the documents they signed and had no reasonable opportunity to learn the truth." That same court pointed out, however, that "generally, it is not reasonable to fail to read a contract; this is true even if the plaintiff relied on the defendant's assertion that it was not necessary to read the contract." *Desert Outdoor Advertising v. Superior Court*, 196 Cal.App.4th 866 (Cal.App. 1 Dist. 2011).

What about duress? In a 2011 Delaware suit, a developer and engineer had a fee dispute and the engineer refused to give up its drawings without a signed release of liability. After the developer signed a general release, it received a cease and desist letter that unauthorized work had been performed on regulated wetlands. The developer sued the engineer for negligence and breach of contract. The court

We've all heard the phrase, 'Ignorance of the law is no excuse,' and the same applies to contracts. If you fail to read it, or understand it, you have no excuse.

See WILLIAM QUATMAN, page 8

Instilling methodology



Jeremy Clarke

SEARCH SAVVY

Independently of what your recruiting team looks like today, begin indoctrinating them into to a statement of principles that calibrates their activities toward a common end.

Taking the time to indoctrinate new recruiting staff is a critical component to developing a synergistic recruiting organization. And while there are undoubtedly wide and diverse functions and tasks that a new recruiter must learn to be effective within your organization, there is nothing to be learned that is quite so critical as “methodology.” After all, it is methodology, not functionality, that truly distinguishes one recruiting program from another.

Now, when we approach the issue of promoting methodology, we’re not speaking about rote training on the fundamental recruiting tasks of document management, or interviewing protocols, or the use of candidate tracking systems, etc. (as important as those tasks are). Methodology goes much deeper than merely training “systems.” Methodology seeks to foster an embrace of the underlying principles that the system is built on – and I think recruiting leaders have forgotten that to some degree. Early on in my professional development I was told, “If you can understand the ‘why,’ you’ll be much better equipped in the performance of the ‘how.’” There is a lot of merit to that. You show me a recruiting team that is operating synergistically and consistently in the performance of its varied and diverse tasks and I’ll show you a team that understands why, principally, those tasks are important and how they contribute to the broader objectives of the team.

Needless to say, successful organizations mutually rally around a universally understood methodology but establishing this kind of culture on your team can be pretty hard to achieve. In my experience, one of the most important things a recruiting leader can inject into their recruiting operations is a clear, measurable “statement of operating principles” to which every function is made subordinate.

Let me give you an example (I’m literally making this up as I type): “Acme Recruiting is committed to providing our partners with only the industry’s **1) best talent, 2) collaboratively, 3) prudently, 4)**

expeditiously.” After you implement this statement of operating principles, you can begin marshalling every activity, every initiative across your team, toward that end. In doing so, you actually start calibrating the collective mindset of your recruiting team universally. In other words: you’re promoting a methodology. You’re giving them the “why” so they understand the “how.” You’re starting to infuse an operational moral “doctrine” as it were and there’s nothing quite so effective at developing synergy as universally embraced morality.

Just think of what can be accomplished now with your “statement of principles” in place? Suzie comes to you with an idea for a new recruiting tool. Immediately (after thanking Suzie for taking some initiative), you and she analyze her idea against the team’s statement of principles: **1) Best talent:** Does the tool indeed aid us in capturing higher caliber talent? **2) Collaborative:** Does the tool in any way undermine the spirit of collaboration we have worked hard to foster with our hiring constituency? **3) Prudent:** Does the cost associated with this tool exceed its benefit? Is this a financially wise purchase at this point? **4) Expeditious:** Does this tool bring added speed to our operations in securing talent for our managers?

Consider the benefit this brings to issuing measurable annual performance objectives to your team: “Do the objectives I have in mind for Jack magnify and support our statement of principles?” Consider the benefit this brings to actually evaluating an employee’s performance: “Has Sharon’s performance issued a bottom-line impact to the core principles? Does she champion and promote these principles with her peers?”

Whether it’s designing objectives or measuring performance, there must be a methodological “litmus test” against which the goals and activities of your team are evaluated and carried out. Independently of what your recruiting team looks like today, begin indoctrinating them into to a statement of principles that calibrates their activities toward a common end. And look to introduce to the team only those people whom you believe would be eager to embrace and promote those principles as well. ▀▲

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NEWS

Google invests in design industry

\$3 million initiative will focus on non-toxic building materials.

The U.S. Green Building Council announced on the main stage at its annual Greenbuild International Conference and Expo a \$3 million grant from Google that will catalyze the transformation of the building materials industry and accelerate the creation of healthier indoor environments.

"Healthy, non-toxic building materials are a critical component in green building," said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO & founding chair, U.S. Green Building Council. "Fostering awareness of the materials we put into our buildings is of paramount importance, since many materials can link to a host of environmental and health issues. Working with Google enables us to broaden our efforts in the materials industry as we prepare for the next version of the LEED green building program, LEED v4. This updated rating system will paint a more complete picture of materials and products, enabling project teams to make more informed decisions."

"The idea for this project emerged from our own work at Google, where we're

committed to creating the healthiest work environments possible that help employees perform at their best," said Anthony Ravitz, Google's Green Team lead. "USGBC has a deep background in spearheading research, developing a rating system spanning the globe and engaging with the many stakeholders in the building industry, making them the perfect partner to help spur real change on the healthy materials front."

The grant will focus on three areas that will spur the creation of healthier indoor environments and encourage market transformation in the building materials industry: supporting research on building materials and health, developing new transparency tools and engaging stakeholders from across the industry.

"Improving the indoor environment, increasing materials transparency and advancing the understanding of materials' impact on health are critical targets for the LEED program as it continues to evolve," said Scot Horst, senior vice president, LEED, USGBC. "Ultimately, we are looking to create overall benefit for the environment and for human health."

The new initiatives will be developed over the next two years. ▲▲

CALENDAR

WOMEN IN DESIGN CONFERENCE: In the near future, women are projected to account for 51 percent of total labor force growth, says the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. Yet, women make up less than one-quarter of the architecture workforce, 9.7 percent of the civil engineering profession, and roughly 13 percent of other engineering professions.

ZweigWhite will present a conference May 9-10, 2013 in Boston focusing on issues that relate to women in the male-dominated design and environmental professions. The program is being organized by Claire Keerl, principal and director of corporate marketing and Christine Brack, principal and director of consulting, both with ZweigWhite. The multi-day event will include roundtable discussions, focus groups, networking sessions, as well as keynote presentations by industry leaders.

Issues that will be covered include:

- Work/life balance
- Women as bosses
- Mentoring women in design
- Encouraging women to enter profession
- Physical presence
- Career paths for women
- Women and the path to principal
- The age factor
- Alternative careers for women in design and environmental professions
- WBE status

For more information about this upcoming conference email Claire Keerl at ckeerl@zweigwhite.com or log on to www.zweigwhite.com/conference/women-in-design-and-environmental-professions.

OUTLOOK, from page 3

However, the economy is growing and demand for structures is not likely to fall in 2013.

"But the public has shown no appetite to pay higher taxes, tolls or fees to pay for more public construction spending, and some private categories, like office and retail construction, will also remain weak as long as economic growth is sluggish," Simonson says.

WILLIAM QUATMAN, from page 6

threw out the lawsuit based on the signed release. When the developer objected, claiming that it had no choice but to sign because engineer was wrongfully withholding its work product, the court cautioned, "(w)hile Defendants may have driven a hard bargain in refusing to release work product unless Plaintiffs executed the Release, aggressive

Simonson also says that the positive indicators include data on housing starts and building permits, plus a variety of company plant announcements and surveys pointing to a backlog of private investment in manufacturing facilities. On the downside are flat or falling government receipts, lack of voter approval for more spending or taxes, and high vacancy rates for office and retail space.

"Overall, it seems that the consensus is that we will continue to grow into 2013 and 2014," Baker says. ▲▲

negotiation is insufficient to constitute duress." *Riverbend Community, LLC v. Green Stone Engineering, LLC, 2012 WL 1409013 (Del.Super.)*. Again, tough law, but it goes to show that even hard bargains will be upheld in most situations. ▲▲

G. WILLIAM QUATMAN is an architect and general counsel at **Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co.** (Kansas City, MO). Contact him at bquatman@burnsmcd.com.

OFFICE

Gear up for holiday parties

Firms are continuing their traditions, although sometimes in subdued fashion.

By LIISA SULLIVAN
Correspondent

The holiday season is upon us and firms are getting in the spirit. While some may be spending less, companies still believe that holiday parties are an important part of office culture.

CELEBRATE EMPLOYEES. Pam D’Arcy, HR director at **Baskervill** (Richmond, VA), a full-service architectural, engineering, interior design and sustainable design firm, says that the economy has definitely been a factor in planning holiday parties, but the company is still hosting a small event.

“We want to celebrate the holidays and, more importantly, the contributions of our employees in another tough year,” D’Arcy says.

As a result, this year, Baskervill is holding more of an “employee-appreciation day” than an actual “holiday party.”

“We’ll choose one day and the principals will serve the employees breakfast and lunch, cafeteria style, so it’s also a social occasion,” she says. “The details haven’t been completely sorted out yet, but when we have done this in the past we paired it with hand-written ‘thank you’ cards from the principals to their respective staff. It’s a shoe-string budget, but we have fun and it’s usually well-received by the employees.”

KEEP IT OPEN. Kimberly Messer, sales/marketing coordinator for **LJB, Inc.** (Cleveland, OH), an 85-person innovative facility and infrastructure design firm, leads the company’s social events committee. She says that this year, LJB is hosting an open-house style event for its staff and spouses/guests. It will be held at a down-



JMZ Architects and Planners, P.C. gives back during the holidays. They are depicted here celebrating Halloween.

town theatre/events venue. No theatre events are happening at the same time, but the view and decorations will be the draw.

“We scheduled it as an open-house, so that people can come and go as their busy holiday season schedule permits. We tried this last year and it was very well-received. We had a great turnout,” Messer says.

LJB is spending about the same this year as it did last year.

“Actually, I can say that we have spent more the last two years than we have in the previous few years, where we simply hosted an employee-only luncheon at the office,” Messer says.

GIVE BACK AND LEARN. Kimberly Filion, associate, director of finance and human resources at **JMZ Architects and Planners, P.C.** (Glens Falls, NY), a 30-person firm, is taking this holiday season time to give back.

OFFICE PARTY PLANNING TIPS

PartyShelf.com, a party planning service, offers some of the following ideas:

- 1) Ask employees what they want; take a survey.
- 2) Try a different location. For example, consider hosting the party at an indoor art gallery, ice skating rink, movie theatre or bowling alley.
- 3) Involve the community. Ask the local high school band to play music at the event or a local church choir to sing carols. Or, maybe you have some talented employees who are willing to put on a show!
- 4) Small businesses might consider hosting a murder mystery event with a holiday theme.
- 5) Provide small party favors or gifts – (nothing with the company logo). Something as simple as chocolate bar is fine.

See HOLIDAY, page 10

ON THE MOVE

RUSSELL PROMOTED: **Scott Russell** has been named vice president of **Buchart Horn's** (New York, NY) environmental practice and was appointed to the firm's board of directors. Russell joined the firm in 1992 and has been regional manager of the State College Office since 2003.

He will continue to be based in BH's State College office. Founded in 1945, Buchart Horn/BASCO Associates has a professional staff of nearly 300 engineers, architects and planners located in offices throughout the eastern and southern U.S. and Germany.

LEO A DALY HIRES: Architecture, planning, engineering, interior design and program management firm **LEO A DALY** (Omaha, NE), has hired Geoffrey Ax, as a regional aviation market director. Ax will be responsible for directing client services for LEO A DALY's key airline and design-builder relationships, and for supporting growth with the firm's aviation clients throughout the southeast and central regions of the United States.

Ax has nearly 15 years of experience in the aviation industry and has managed numerous small and large-scale projects for airport authorities, airlines, airport tenants, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense. These include airport and terminal master-planning and design, cargo facilities, airport and airline operations, aircraft hangars and airline lounges, international arrivals facilities and federal inspection stations.

Prior to joining LEO A DALY, Ax served as an executive vice president for federal programs at Gresham, Smith and Partners and served as client manager for work with Southwest Airlines. In addition, he was the deputy project manager for the design of the Maynard H. Jackson Jr. International Terminal at Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

Ax also was senior project manager at **Giuliani Associates Architects, Inc.** (Alexandria, VA), where he provided planning, programming, design and construction administration for projects under his direction, as well as project budgeting, scheduling and execution of the entire architecture and engineering team. During his tenure, he oversaw multiple airside and landside infrastructure and building projects at Washington Dulles International and Reagan National Airports.

"Geoffrey Ax offers our clients a unique blend of qualities starting with a strong drive to understand their needs and following all the way through construction to see that their objectives are met every time" said Daniel Viscardi, LEO A DALY's vice president and corporate director of aviation programs.

ETC HAS NEW CEO: **ETC Building & Design, Inc.** (San Diego, CA), a design-build firm for the healthcare, life sciences and military fields, announced the appointment of **Timothy Jacoby** to the role

of CEO. Jacoby will be responsible for all facets of the company's operations throughout its San Diego, Los Angeles and Bay Area offices. Co-founder of ETC, Michael Essrig, will remain president of the organization, overseeing ETC's business development, marketing and philanthropic programs, while co-founder and Executive Vice President Chris Taylor will maintain his focus on the expansion of the design-build division of the organization.

Jacoby previously served as vice president of facilities, real estate planning, construction, plant operations and maintenance at Rady Children's Hospital from 2003 to 2012. Under his direction, Rady Children's Hospital completed a number of significant capital improvement projects, including a gas turbine powered co-generation plant that allows the hospital to produce all of its own electricity, a new parking structure and a new 280,000-square-foot patient care tower, as well as the development and acquisition of multiple medical buildings. During his 24-year career in the Navy, Jacoby held many key positions including commanding officer and served aboard nuclear powered submarines, aircraft carriers, and conventional surface ships.

"I am thrilled to be joining ETC Building & Design and have admired the company for many years. The next several years will be very exciting for ETC as we continue to expand our services and offer the very best building and design services for our clients," Jacoby said. "I look forward to bringing my hospital 'owner' experience and considerable engineering experience to ETC so we can translate this experience into reliable, sustainable, robust and cost-effective projects for our customers."

ETC Building & Design's 2013 plans include expansion in additional West Coast regions with a continued focus on healthcare, military and life sciences design and construction.

URBAN HIRES: Urban Engineers (Philadelphia, PA) a 200-person consulting firm that offers transportation, planning, program management, and construction services, announced the addition of nationally recognized transit planner **Margarita Gagliardi** to the firm. As vice president of transit planning, she will lead Urban's transit and passenger rail professionals in transit-related planning assignments.

Gagliardi has 35 years of professional experience, focused on overseeing and managing major transportation improvements from concept design and alternatives analyses to final design and startup. She has tied together the technical, environmental, and public outreach aspects of major transportation planning projects. Her diverse background includes developing transit capital and operating improvement plans, coordinating transit projects with real estate and development projects, and implementing quality assurance programs. Her extensive experience also includes overseeing several New Starts studies and program management oversight programs for the Federal Transit Administration.

HOLIDAY, from page 9

"In the past, we would treat our employees to an extended lunch at a local restaurant," Filion says. "A few years ago, all of our employees agreed to donate their time and efforts to the Salvation Army holiday food basket drive instead of having a holiday party. We always have a lot of food at our office, so this was one way we could give back to our community and keep lean at the same time!"

And, JMZ doesn't just play for the holi-

days. The firm also spends a day-and-a-half at an office retreat.

"This year, we boarded a coach on a Thursday afternoon, stopped at Magic Hat Brewing Company in Burlington, Vermont, for a tour and tastings, and then continued onto The Essex in Essex Junction, Vermont for an overnight retreat," Filion says. "We had a secret Iron Chef competition that was all set up for our employees when we arrived. We had seven teams of four to five people and we had to create pizzas and trifles for the executive chef to taste and

rate based on a variety of factors. Afterwards, we gathered around a bonfire, complete with s'mores and an acoustic guitarist. Some of our employees are musicians and brought their own instruments to join in."

So, it appears that the economy has not at all impeded holiday planning (volunteering) or the staff retreat at JMZ.

"We make sure that our employees are productive, challenged and happy by giving them what they need to succeed," Filion says. ▀▀

PROFILE

A CFO with perspective

Carmen Borgeson keeps firm healthy during rapid growth.

By BRYAN SULLIVAN
Correspondent

Shared learning and growth is what it's all about for Carmen Borgeson, CFO at **BRAUN INTERTEC** (Minneapolis, MN), a 500-person multidisciplinary engineering firm.

Borgeson is an active team member in developing strategy and making a long-term plan while maintaining and taking the lead for banking and credit relationships for the firm. A main focus of her vital role is to also assist with risk management. All the while she coaches and trains the firm's business unit managers and manages the accounting and financial aspects of BRAUN INTERTEC. They include: cash management, tax management, budgeting and forecasting, establishing and maintaining policies and procedures, and ensuring accuracy and completeness of all financial information.

SOME HISTORY. Borgeson has 11 years of public accounting experience with focuses in audit, tax, small business and consulting. She has been with BRAUN INTERTEC for eight years. She started out as the finance director and was later promoted to CFO.

In 1993, she sat for and passed the CPA exam during her last semester of college. She received her undergraduate degree in accounting at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls; and her MBA from the University of Minnesota at the Carlson School of Management.

While she worked in public accounting, she was the audit manager for the BRAUN INTERTEC account for six years.

"I was recruited by the firm's former CFO," Borgeson says. ▲▲

A CONVERSATION WITH CARMEN BORGESON



Carmen Borgeson, CFO, BRAUN INTERTEC.

THE ZWEIG LETTER:
What major accomplishment are you most proud of since you have been with the firm?

Carmen Borgeson: Keeping the company financially healthy through a period of very rapid growth and improving finance's business partnering with operations.

TZL: What are your key strengths? What do you feel the key strengths are for an effective CFO?

CB: First of all, I love to learn. I was "raised" in public accounting, and not engineering. When I started at BRAUN INTERTEC, I found our operating activities to be very interesting. Being the company is a multidiscipline engineering company, we not only perform environmental and geotechnical engineering, consulting and testing, but we also provide services requiring the use of heavier equipment, such as drilling, and we have an analytical chemistry lab. As a result of my interest level and my love of learning, I asked many questions of our operational team to learn more about our operations. I still do this today as I learn of new services we are offering and new projects we are performing to better understand our operational manager's business plans. I have been able to couple my financial background with what I have learned to become a more effective business partner with operations via coaching and training. I am a very driven person. I have very high expectations for myself and my team. I enjoy celebrating successes and giving credit to my team members when credit is due.

TZL: How would you describe your work style?

CB: Collaborative! Results-oriented while having fun and enjoying the work and interaction with my fellow employee owners.

TZL: What are your top priorities for 2013?

CB: There are a few. They include:

- Supporting our continued growth. Since 2009, we have nearly doubled in size.
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation – we are replacing our CRM, proposal and financial and project accounting software with an integrated ERP platform.
- Continued improvement of our financial, project and risk management training.

TZL: As CFO, what kind of decision-making latitude do you have? What decisions can you make solely?

CB: Any item related to generally accepted accounting principles and the application of these principles to BRAUN INTERTEC; and any items related to the IRS code and the application of these rules to operations of my finance and accounting department.

TZL: Tell me about what has come to be known as "Time on Carmen's couch."

CB: As I previously mentioned, I love learning about the technical side of our services and about new services and projects that we are involved in. "Time on Carmen's couch" is time when operational managers and I discuss operational issues – typically in a one-on-one setting. I view "Time on Carmen's couch" as being a two-way exchange of information. With my financial background, my broader view of our company in my role as CFO, and my knowledge of our services, I enjoy discussing potential solutions to the issue with the operational manager and challenging them to fully think through the potential impacts of various solutions. Although it would be much quicker for me to tell them what solution I think is best, I much prefer talking through the potential solutions with them and challenging the potential solutions; I believe this is where true learning occurs.

TZL: What do you enjoy in your spare time?

CB: I enjoy being with my family and friends. I have a four-month-old and a three-year-old. My kids are a lot of fun to be with and are changing every day. I enjoy being outside, whether running, walking, or riding my bike. And, if I have time, I like to read.

TRANSACTIONS

MELD DESIGN FORMED: Gary Vlastic, a 20-year veteran in event and design production, and Kara DiOrio, founder of interior design firm **DiOrio Design**, announced the formation of **Meld Design** (Salt Lake City, UT), a full-service architecture and design firm specializing in creating both permanent and temporary spaces.

Vlastic and DiOrio have previously collaborated on a range of projects, and recently saw an opportunity to create a new firm that addresses all aspects of design. Meld will offer services across the design spectrum, including interior design, architecture and experiential design – a practice aimed at creating temporary spaces with an emphasis on the user experience. Vlastic has an extensive background in experiential design, having most recently created and produced the ceremony for the grand opening of the City Creek Center in downtown Salt Lake City.

Award-winning architect Stephen Tobler and interior designer Jessica Bender are joining Vlastic and DiOrio to form the core Meld Design team. Stephen Tobler has worked with **Richard Meier & Partners, KNP** in the Netherlands, and **The Getty Center** in Los Angeles, among others. He established his own practice in Jackson, Wyo, **Tobler Duncker Architects**, which he was a part of for 14 years. Meld Design will also work collaboratively with local artists and craftsmen on a project basis to design personalized, unique and imaginative spaces that capitalize on the region's local talent.

"Our vision was to create a firm that takes advantage of the wealth of talent we have here in Utah," Vlastic said. "By assessing the needs of each client, we can bring together different aesthetic styles to make sure we are creating the perfect space every time. Collaboration is the heart of this endeavor, and I know that it will bring about some amazing and unforgettable results."

"The essence of Meld Design is to constantly explore the boundaries between art, design and architecture," DiOrio said. "As our name suggests, by continually bringing in new people with distinctive skills and ideas, we are able to meld these different approaches together to produce exceptional spaces."

Vlastic is an accomplished artist, performer and art director, and has 20 years of experience in the event and production design arena. His clients have included notable organizations such as the Olympic Games, Novell, Samsung, Sky Vodka, the Sundance Film Festival and the International Sculpture Center. DiOrio began her career as a textile artist producing soft furnishings. In 2000, DiOrio launched a bedding collection that was featured in numerous showrooms across the U.S. Sundance Catalog later commissioned her to design a limited edition bedding collection for its catalog. Her work has been featured in Metropolitan Home, Interior Design, Celebrated Living, My House and Utah Homes and Gardens.

HKS BUYS: HKS, Inc. (Dallas, TX), a 1,000-person architectural, design and planning firm with 27 U.S. and international offices, acquired the Miami-based education design firm **HADP Architecture, Inc.**, expanding its current higher-education client practice.

HADP Architecture, a 30-person firm with offices in Coral Gables, Fla.; Atlanta, Ga.; St. Petersburg, Fla. and Fort Myers, Fla., will be renamed **HKS HADP Studio** and will focus on higher-education clients worldwide. The group will work in tandem with HKS's existing K-12 educational and higher-education studios.

According to Ralph Hawkins, CEO and chairman, HKS, Inc., "The merger will expand the firm's current, highly regarded higher-education practice. We've been working with HADP for more than 15 years. We've grown to know and respect the staff including David Harper, a nationally recognized thought-leader in higher-education student life facilities. Our collaboration will allow us to continue to create thoughtful and innovative designs for our clients."

Named one of Architectural Record's "Top 250 Architecture Firms"

in 2012, HADP Architecture has completed more than 1,500 educational projects. The firm has worked with 60 university/college clients to complete 133 major higher-education projects.

HADP President and CEO David Harper will serve as a principal and director of higher education, responsible for all higher-education projects and market sector operations. Harper also will serve on the HKS Education Development Committee, setting direction for HKS educational projects worldwide.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for HADP to expand its reach, and have greater resources available by joining HKS, an award-winning, global architecture firm," Harper said.

The relationship between HADP Architecture and HKS spans a 15-year history of designing educational projects together. The firms are currently teamed jointly on two major university projects: Parkview Housing at Florida International University and the Student Housing and Living/Learning Center & Dining Hall at University of Texas at Dallas.

In recent years, HKS has completed educational projects for major universities; smaller campuses, both public and private, and community colleges. The firm's higher-education clients list includes Eastfield College, the University of North Carolina, Shenandoah University, the University of Florida, Texas A&M University, University of Utah, Texas Christian University and the University of Texas.

Since its founding in 1939, HKS has completed construction projects totaling more than \$73 billion in more than 1,178 cities located in 77 countries.

TERRACON BUYS: Terracon Consultants, Inc. (Olathe, KS), a 2,800-person employee-owned engineering consulting firm providing geotechnical, environmental, construction materials and facilities services from more than 130 offices in 39 states nationwide, acquired **Earthtec Inc.** (Roseville, CA), a geotechnical, environmental, special inspection and construction materials testing services firm founded in 1981. Client sectors include commercial/retail, industrial, healthcare, telecommunications, education, government and architecture/engineering/construction.

"Joining with Earthtec allows Terracon to strengthen our resources and capabilities in Northern California to better serve clients in this area," said David Gaboury, president and CEO of Terracon. "Earthtec has an excellent, long-standing reputation, and we are excited to join forces."

Earthtec's employees have joined Terracon's Sacramento office. Earthtec is now operating as Terracon.

"Together with Terracon, we will bring greater resources to meet the diverse needs of our clients as well as provide enhanced career paths for our employees," said Curtis Hendrick, president for Earthtec. "Our competitive edge is our people and experience and this will only improve by joining forces with Terracon."

HOW IS THE M&A MARKET SHAPPING-UP? Is your firm considering a merger, an acquisition, or a sale? Or have you recently completed a merger or acquisition transaction? If so, then you'll want to see the survey results in the 2013 "Merger & Acquisition Survey of Architecture, Engineering, Planning & Environmental Consulting Firms." The 23rd edition of this comprehensive report includes all the latest data on the state of merger and acquisition activity in the design and environmental consulting industry.

The survey is being released in February, 2013, but you can benefit now from a pre-publication price by ordering online at www.zweigwhite.com/p-2146-Merger___Acquisition_Survey__2013.