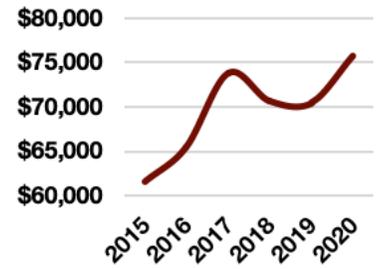


TRENDLINES

Value per employee



In Zweig Group's *2020 Valuation Report of AEC Firms*, yearly trends for the value per employee ratio were analyzed to better understand the market. As one of the least volatile value ratios calculated by Zweig Group, the value per employee ratio is a quick way for firms to assess their relative value. Value per employee has steadily increased over the last five years, reaching an all-time high in 2020. Since 2007, value per employee has undergone an average annual increase of almost 4.5 percent.

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Ideas and execution

Understanding this is essential in your ability to grow your firm and successfully execute your strategy.



Phil Keil

As a strategist, an engineer, and a physicist, I'm interested in the intersection of ideas, problem solving, and execution. We work with companies every day to define their purpose, which is a key driver of success at the core of an organization's strategy. High-growth firms have a purpose that plays two important roles. It enables companies to redefine their playing field and allows them to reshape their value proposition. What is a purpose, though? A purpose is an idea, a belief in the way the world or our company could or should be. Therefore, our success depends on spreading and propagating that idea. How does that happen?

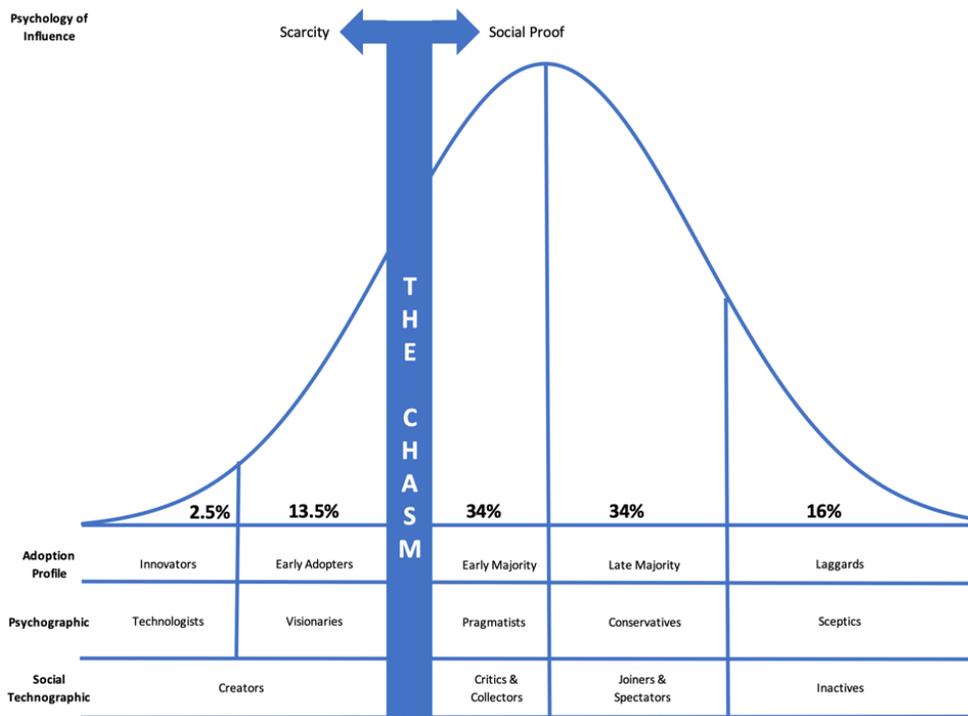
Our friend and reference point for this conversation is going to be something you may have run across before, the law of diffusion of innovation developed by Everett Rogers (shown in the graph on the next page). The theory behind this idea is that it is path dependent and each category of adopters of an idea/innovation influences the next. This naturally leads to an interesting conversation on network theory, but we will save that for another article. The main problem most people do not realize is the difference in psychographics (attitudes, aspirations, and other motivational factors) between the types of individuals that make up each category.

For any idea to be successful, you must cross what Geoffrey Moore defined as "The Chasm." In other words, you need somewhere between 15 percent and 18 percent acceptance of the idea in a population before it takes hold and you gain acceptance by the majority. At that transition, how we communicate to the innovators and early adopters is vastly different from how we communicate and the actions we take once we move into the majority. To solve this problem, we have to delve into the psychology a little. For those who have been following me for a while, you didn't think we would get through this topic without reference to neuroscience or psychology, did you? A great reference on this topic is Robert Cialdini's book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* which covers six principals of persuasion: reciprocity, scarcity, liking, authority, social proof, and commitment/consistency.

While several of these factors are at play, the two that are most descriptive in how we can communicate to each of these groups are scarcity and social proof. Innovators and early adopters are excited about ideas that others don't know about yet or the status of being "the first" while the majority are looking for something that has been tested. They will be more critical of the ideas and perhaps messengers unless you can show some proof of concept or evidence of success.

Communication plays a vital role, as we've discussed. Your message should fit with where your audience is on this distribution. Putting

See PHIL KEIL, page 2



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yourself in the shoes of each of these groups can help change your perspective. For example, GirlTrek, which encourages African American women to live healthy and fulfilling lives through walking, was founded on shared values around history, health, control, and independence rather than a call to action for weight loss. This undergirds another important point. Everything flows down from your purpose and should filter into your mission, your values, and your behaviors.

Additional tips to consider on spreading your idea and implementing your strategy:

- **Focus on outcomes, not a program or approach.** This enables co-creation of ideas to spread and solutions that stick. You must be willing to be bold with your ideas and this comes at some risk of failure. Rigidity will only hinder the stickiness of the idea.
- **Rely on existing networks.** Small groups and existing infrastructure can aid you in spreading your message. This can be professional organizations down to committees within your firm made up of new professionals.
- **Recruit and train others.** Find those who can ally with you and train them to spread the message.
- **Use technology to reach a larger audience.** There are a ton of resources at our fingertips and free platforms that will allow you to connect your idea to the people who can help make it reality.
- **Your purpose should be big.** Big, bold, and sometimes controversial ideas tend to spread like wildfire. Keep this in mind when developing and communicating with your audience.
- **Embrace change.** The funny thing about ideas is that they shift and evolve. Once it gets into the mind of someone new, they make it theirs. It is an important part of the process and you should embrace it.

Understanding this is essential in your ability to grow your firm and successfully execute your strategy. Do not confuse strategy design for execution, though. Many firms do this and end up with an action item list several pages long without any organizational positioning or strategic design. Strategy design operates at the organizational level while execution operates on the individual level. Understanding the law of diffusion of innovation will help you translate strategy into execution and make for a more successful implementation of your ideas. ▀

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



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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

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We are all in the consulting business!

“To maximize your chances for success, remember you are in the consulting business. Keep these points in mind as you guide the growth and development of your business.”



Mark
Zweig

Sometimes I think architects and engineers forget that they are in the consulting business. Acknowledging this fact affects every single aspect of how you should do things.

Here are my thoughts:

- **Specialization is critical to your success.** Why do some of you act as if a good architect or engineer can do anything? Your clients don't feel that way. You wouldn't hire an IT consultant to install your Deltek system who has never done one before. So why should a client hire you to do something you have never done yourself? Being a generalist is not the way to be successful. Specialization drives the selection process and greatly affects what you can charge for your services.
- **Because the only thing you have to sell is time and expertise, you can't give it away.** Doing so doesn't lead to the sale of anything else. This is a huge problem today, particularly for architects who seem to be expected to give away most of their expertise during the sales process for free. Entering design competitions along with 25 other companies is insane. You have to figure out a way to stay busy

on productive jobs so you won't be tempted to work for free.

- **Your time and that of your employees is limited and needs to be used working for paying clients if you are going to be able to pay your people and yourself.** You have to use your time very wisely. Cut out all unnecessary meetings. Eliminate any bureaucracy that you can. And be sure you personally use your time as effectively and productively as you can. Remain active on billable projects and set a good example for everyone else.
- **The time of your best employees is particularly valuable.** Getting people into the right roles, both in the company and on specific projects, is crucial. If everyone is operating one or two levels below their real capability you will be paying too much to get work completed. You will also be demotivating

See MARK ZWEIG, page 4





CEO ROUNDTABLE RETREAT: APRIL 2-3, 2020 | ATLANTA, GA

The CEO Roundtable Retreat is a unique opportunity for AEC firm leaders to engage and interact with industry peers to discuss current issues facing firms today, explore industry trends and next practices, and confront the biggest challenges they face leading their firms.

Zweig Group's CEO Chad Clinehens, P.E., moderates the program guiding group conversations, encouraging integration and networking, and ensuring attendees gain valuable insight, new ideas and tools – and a new network of colleagues – to foster effective leadership at their respective firms.

Come prepared to discuss your biggest challenges and successes during this highly interactive session. With you in control of the subject matter, roundtable discussions strike at the heart of what you need to effect change in your organization.

Past attendees of CEO Roundtable events state “there is no better forum for dialogue than with peers experiencing the same issues I am” and “the statistics provided by Zweig Group through their continual research of firms and firm leaders gives me the exact benchmarking data I need to justify change and action in my firm.”

In addition to the private dinner and guided discussions, attendees are invited to participate in a Porsche Driving Experience at the Porsche Experience Center Atlanta.

To register or learn more visit bit.ly/CEOTZL or call 800.466.6275.

BUSINESS NEWS

WARE MALCOMB ANNOUNCES CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETE ON BRAILLE INSTITUTE'S NEW ANAHEIM FACILITY Ware Malcomb, an award-winning international design firm, announced construction is complete on the brand new facility of the Braille Institute located at 527 North Dale Avenue in Anaheim, California. Ware Malcomb provided executive architect and interior design services for the project. Ware Malcomb's branding studio also implemented interior and exterior signage that incorporated the Braille Institute's new logo and brand strategy.

The Braille Institute is a non-profit organization offering a broad range of free programs, classes and services for thousands of students of all ages to empower themselves to live more enriching lives with blindness and vision loss. Founded in 1919 in Los Angeles, the Braille Institute first opened its Anaheim facility in 1971, with Ware Malcomb completing various projects on their campus since that time. Having served the community for four decades, the existing buildings were demolished to make way for a new state-of-the-art facility.

The new, 14,735 square foot single-story facility includes a variety of unique spaces, such as an instructional kitchen, to teach the visually impaired life skills and how to navigate through the world. The new building also features a central courtyard that contains multiple auditory and tactile guides including a bubbling fountain and contrasting surfaces. Ware

MARK ZWEIG, from page 3

your best people. This condition often occurs in mature companies that aren't growing. Their workforce is aging and costing them more every year, and they aren't hiring less experienced people at the entry level.

“Sometimes I think architects and engineers forget that they are in the consulting business. Acknowledging this fact affects every single aspect of how you should do things.”

- **Making your services into products makes them easier to sell.** Selling intangible services is never easy. That means spending some time working to develop standard processes and work products for specific situations that you can sell. When your services become products, they are easier to describe and easier for your people to explain to your clients. And that also gives you an opportunity to clearly differentiate what you will do for the client versus what your competitors will do.
- **Good verbal and written communication skills are essential to your success, so you cannot have people on the team who lack those skills.** Consultants have to

Malcomb developed exterior and interior signage to enhance and highlight the facility's new contemporary architecture, while integrating the Braille Institute's new logo and brand standards.

“Moving all of Braille Institute's Anaheim facilities together into one large building instead of several smaller ones has made it much easier for their patrons to navigate, and creates operational efficiencies,” said Tom Myers, regional vice president of Ware Malcomb.

“The Braille Institute has been providing vital services for the visually impaired community in Southern California for 100 years, and this new space will allow them to do even more in the decades ahead,” said Mary Cheval, director, interior architecture and design of Ware Malcomb.

Ware Malcomb has worked with the Braille Institute on several projects over the past 25 years.

Established in 1972, Ware Malcomb provides 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 & 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.

be able to sell their ideas to their clients if they want their clients to implement them. Those dealing directly with the client need to be able to communicate requirements and priorities to other project team members. Those on a team need to be able to clear up any questions or issues they have with management so they do the right thing. In many cases, communication skills may be more critical than design or technical skills.

- **Recruitment and retention must be treated as critical functions.** Because you are in the consulting business and sell time and expertise, having that time and expertise to sell becomes one of your most critical organizational functions. Yet A/E firms have historically done a poor job here. They don't have recruitment budgets. They don't have good onboarding processes. They spend almost nothing on training. They do little beyond annual reviews and pay increases to retain people. The result of all of this is critical jobs to unfilled and we have very expensive employee turnover we shouldn't be having.

So in order to maximize your chances for success, remember you are in the consulting business. Keep these points in mind as you guide the growth and development of your business. ▀

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



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2020 Seminar Calendar

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APRIL

- 2-3 CEO Roundtable Retreat
Atlanta, Georgia
- 15-16 Elevating Doer-Sellers:
Intensive 2 Day Workshop
San Francisco, California

MAY

- 19 Project Management for AEC
Professionals
Tampa, Florida
- 27 Learn The Language of
Business: Financial
Management
Dallas, Texas

JUNE

- 11-12 The Principals Academy
Washington, D.C.
- 17-18 Leadership Skills for AEC
Professionals
Seattle, Washington
- 24 Elevate Your Recruiting &
Retention Strategy
Denver, Colorado

JULY

- 14 Learn The Language of
Business: Financial
Management
Chicago, Illinois
- 23-24 The Principals Academy
Portland, Oregon

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

SEPTEMBER

- 30 ElevateHer Symposium
Denver, Colorado
- 30-2 Elevate AEC Conference
& Awards Gala
Denver, Colorado

OCTOBER

- 14 Project Management for AEC
Professionals
Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 22 Elevate Your Recruiting &
Retention Strategy
Los Angeles, California

NOVEMBER

- 5-6 The Principals Academy
Phoenix, Arizona
- 12-13 CEO Roundtable Retreat
Napa, California

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PROFILE



Exceed expectations: Diane Bicknese

President of Schaefer Engineering, Inc. (Wentzville, MO), a firm founded on integrity with a commitment to provide quality professional forensic consulting services nationwide.

By LIISA ANDREASSEN
Correspondent

Bicknese first learned about the company when her husband, Randy, vice president, started working there in 2004. Bicknese then followed suit and took a job with Schaefer as an engineer. In 2017, the couple became Schaefer's owners. Together, they're actively involved in project work and client development on a daily basis.

"Schaefer Engineering, Inc. is certified as a Women's Business Enterprise through the Women's Business Enterprise National Council," Bicknese says. "We sincerely value and support our entire team and facilitate a work atmosphere where everyone is respected and welcomed."

A CONVERSATION WITH DIANE BICKNESE.

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

Diane Bicknese: The key business performance indicators that I watch most carefully are billable hours, project count, and accounts receivable. I regularly share the performance indicators with my staff because it is important for the entire team to be cognizant of the state of the firm and the industry. It's important that they see the results of their actions and commitments – good or bad.

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

DB: My husband and I worked together at the firm for 11 years before we purchased it when the original owner retired. As a result, significant overlap between work and family life occurs.

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

DB: We work to differentiate the firm by offering unique solutions, so there is always a demand for our expertise and services. We use new technology, tools, and software to be efficient and accurate with data collection. We produce a work product that is easy to understand and communicate which is needed for breaking down and explaining complex incidents to non-technical people such as members of a jury. Technology includes 3D laser scanning equipment, drones and a variety of powerful analytical software packages. Another unique solution is making sure that there is constant collaboration within our expert team in order to provide consistent and thorough investigative services.

“We do not have an organizational chart. Those who have good organizational skills are asked to lead certain projects or groups. Simple.”

TZL: Are you using the R&D tax credit? If so, how is it working for your firm? If not, why not?

DB: No. We do not meet the eligibility requirements.

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?

DB: As a manager, I try to listen to all sides of a story and fully investigate a situation before jumping to conclusions. No one can fault you when the result is truly fair for all parties. We do not offer any formal training because we don't have any other managers in our small firm outside of Randy and I. We do not have an organizational chart. Those who have good organizational skills are asked to lead certain projects or groups. Simple.

TZL: When you identify a part of your business that is not pulling its weight in terms of profitability or alignment with the firm's mission, what steps do you take, and what's the timeline, to address the issue while minimizing impacts to the rest of the company?

DB: I will have a meeting with the person/group and reiterate that they must drive projects and their clients. Be the one to make the call, not wait to receive it. The focus needs to be on exceeding the clients' expectations and always finding a solution

to ensure we deliver what they request.

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?

DB: One negative attitude effects the entire team's morale. People will begin to question their own dedication to the team and their place on it. It makes people question even if there is no true issue or concern. Meet the problem head on and act quickly as needed.

TZL: Ownership transition can be tricky, to say the least. What's the key to ensuring a smooth passing of the baton? What's the biggest pitfall to avoid?

DB: You must set goals and make plans years in advance. You cannot be over prepared for an ownership transition.

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

DB: When there is a tough decision to be made, you need to make it and not look back. First and foremost, trust your instincts.

TZL: In one word or phrase, what do you describe as your number one job responsibility as CEO?

DB: Manage and organize resources.

“When there is a tough decision to be made, you need to make it and not look back. First and foremost, trust your instincts.”

TZL: What happens to the firm if you leave tomorrow?

DB: Schaefer Engineering operates and is structured so that the loss of one person does not cripple it. There is a collaborative effort in every key element and program in our firm.

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

DB: Schaefer Engineering, Inc. is certified as a Women's Business Enterprise

See EXCEED EXPECTATIONS, page 8



HEADQUARTERS: Wentzville, MO

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 15

YEAR FOUNDED: 2002

NUMBER OF OFFICE LOCATIONS: 1

SERVICES: Fire and explosion causation, product and system evaluation, vehicular accident investigation and reconstruction, materials and metallurgical engineering, and forensic engineering testing services

MARKETS: The firm provides quality forensic consulting services nationwide to law firms, manufacturers, insurance companies, independent adjusting companies, third-party administrators, truck lines, municipalities, and individuals.

EXPERTISE: Mechanical and metallurgical engineering expertise includes: vehicular accident investigation and reconstruction analysis with emphasis in commercial vehicles. Experts also provide product failure analysis including structure mechanical systems and equipment, vehicle and marine components/systems, mechanical machinery, plumbing and fire-sprinkler systems, and fuel gas equipment as well as solid fuel-burning appliances for fire causation. Carbon monoxide exposure investigations are also performed. Electrical engineering expertise includes evaluation of electrical products, components and systems. Additionally, it includes investigation of electrical arc blast, shock, and electrocution incidents. Experts provide equipment damage assessments due to water or lightning, and investigation of electrical artifacts potentially involved in the ignition of a fire.

TRANSACTIONS

LANDDESIGN GROWS, ACQUIRING NORTHERN VIRGINIA ENGINEERING FIRM Acclaimed national leader in planning, landscape architecture, and civil engineering **LandDesign** has announced its acquisition of the Washington, D.C.-area engineering firm **BC Consultants**.

The acquired firm, which is retaining all its employees, has been renamed LandDesign and will add a new and strategic Fairfax County location for the multidisciplinary firm currently operating five vibrant and growing offices in the metro areas of Charlotte, North Carolina; Washington, D.C.; Dallas, Texas; Orlando, Florida; and Boulder, Colorado.

This is a first-ever acquisition for LandDesign in its 40-year history. The selection of the design-focused, 14-person civil engineering firm BC Consultants, Inc., based in Fair Lakes, Virginia, reflects LandDesign's growing presence in the Mid-Atlantic and Washington, D.C. metro markets, where it employs landscape architects, civil engineers, planners, and urban designers. The new Northern Virginia studio will infuse complementary experience and key professional services as well as expertise in the public sector and in the education market, where LandDesign has been growing its client list.

"We've committed to a strategic goal of providing all of our services in every office, allowing us to better serve our clients in the development process, from idea to reality," says Rhett Crocker, president of LandDesign. "In particular, this investment in acquiring BC Consultants allows us to nearly double our experience in the market and grow our integrated practice with an engineering team steeped in a similar culture of design excellence and creating value for its clients."

LandDesign and BC Consultants reached an

agreement for the acquisition in December. The expansion aligns with LandDesign's organic growth trajectory, supporting the firm's successful and unique methodology while allowing the merged group to better service clients regionally with more in-house civil engineering resources. The two firms also share a focus on cultivating highly talented expert practitioners in integrated service delivery.

Like LandDesign, which had 31 people prior to the acquisition, BC Consultants has supported landscape architecture and field surveying services in-house in addition to its core of civil engineering, creating a valuable approach to full land design and development services for clients including real estate developers, architects, public agencies, municipalities, and corporations.

The merged firms also share a belief in creating enduring value for client and community, "creating places that matter," says Matt Clark, PLA, managing partner of LandDesign's D.C. office.

"We all believe in providing great service to our clients and working collaboratively with them to advance their vision – not merely our design ideals," Clark says.

Clark emphasizes that both LandDesign and BC Consultants have been active in the Mid-Atlantic market for about 35 years, and both are well-known players with significant established footprints.

BC Consultants also brings deep familiarity working with public agencies and government and education clients, strengthening LandDesign's knowledge base on the area's priorities, dynamics, and regulatory challenges.

"We're similarly value-driven firms who see high-quality design delivery as a given," says Clark. "Even more important, both firms

believe that delivering projects to endure the test of time is essential to creating value for our clients and the community."

"LandDesign has an excellent reputation as a leading design firm supporting top development groups and public agencies, making it an atmosphere for continued success," says Jim Scanlon, L.S., P.E., LEED AP.

Scanlon was recently named director of engineering for LandDesign's Washington, D.C. leadership team, which includes landscape architects and partners Stephanie Pankiewicz, PLA, ASLA, and Gabriela Cañamar Clark, PLA, in addition to LandDesign cofounder and former president Peter Crowley, PLA.

Also in the Washington, D.C. office, the executive director of growth Deborah Miller adds, "As LandDesign continues to execute growth strategies to build our client portfolio, our offices, and our people, our new colleagues will be an incredible asset for ensuring we are successful, providing insight and mentorship to our upcoming practitioners and building on an entrepreneurial culture with diverse opportunities for growth."

Founded in 1978, LandDesign is an award-winning design firm offering urban design, planning, civil engineering, and landscape architecture solutions to public and private sector clients across the globe.

With offices across the United States, the LandDesign team effectively brings innovative, buildable, sustainable, and ecologically responsible projects to life worldwide. The firm always asks the question, "Why just make something when you can create something that matters?" LandDesign: Creating places that matter.

EXCEED EXPECTATIONS, from page 7

through the Women's Business Enterprise National Council. We sincerely value and support our entire team and facilitate a work atmosphere where everyone is respected and welcomed. In addition, the firm recognizes the commitment to supplier diversity that is embraced by corporations and government agencies today, and we can add diversity to our clients' supply chain.

TZL: A firm's longevity is valuable. What are you doing to encourage your staff to stick around?

DB: We share company profits with every employee so they are financially rewarded for their hard work and management of projects and clients. ▀





Impeach!

If you are within the leadership group of your company, there are times when you may need to purge your leadership team to move forward.



**Stephen
Lucy**

OK, I admit the title of my article was meant to get your attention in these political times. While not labeled impeachment within a business setting, there are times when we may all face the decision as to whether or not leadership within the firm needs to be removed.

Leadership changes due to poor financial performance or company scandals are reported all the time for large corporations that have big brand names to protect. Although our profession may seem to be immune, if you are within the leadership group of your company, there are times when you may need to purge your leadership team to move forward.

The reasons to replace members of firm leadership are varied. Embezzlement of funds or sexual harassment claims – these are easy to confront and act upon. The more difficult failures may be subject to interpretation or perception, such as failure to lead. Of course, failure to lead involves a long checklist. These 10 are at the top of my list in evaluating whether or not a leader or partner must go:

1) **Inability to motivate.** At both the individual and

team level, a good leader must be able to motivate his or her staff. Poor morale typically is the result of failure to mentor, communicate, and evaluate performance and productivity.

- 2) **Lack of a strategic course.** If your leadership team cannot articulate the firm's course over the short- and long-term, you will hinder your growth and success. In addition, leaders must engage others to understand and implement those strategies that enable the firm to stay on course.
- 3) **Failure to be accountable.** Do you kick your firm's problems down the road? Many do, and this failure to take action to address and correct those problems only worsens over time. A strong leader knows when to step in, advise, and act.
- 4) **Loose fiscal policies.** Carefree spending, poor bookkeeping, favoritism in terms of rewards and

See STEPHEN LUCY, page 10



ON THE MOVE

ARATI RANGASWAMY PROMOTED TO DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AT SCA ARCHITECTURE Arati Rangaswamy, a 27-year veteran of the architectural design industry, has been promoted to director of operations at **SCA Architecture**, a San Diego-based architectural firm, announced firm owner and founder Dennie Smith.

In her new role, Rangaswamy oversees, leads, and manages the daily operations of the firm in terms of staffing and workload. She directs risk management measures related to the firm's project contract obligations, supervises the implementation of operational strategies and goals, and ensures the quality and production standards of the firm are being met for all design and contract documents.

Rangaswamy joined SCA Architecture in 2012, initially serving as project manager, then senior project manager. Over the past eight years, she has been pivotal to the firm's performance and stability and provided oversight of numerous high-profile projects.

Her project involvement at the firm includes having served as senior project manager for Viasat's 23-acre expansion of its headquarters at Bressi Ranch in Carlsbad; project manager for the 300,000-square-foot Petco National Support Center in Rancho Bernardo, recipient of the 2016 AIA Energy Efficiency award sponsored by SDG&E; project manager for the 270,000-square-foot La Costa Town Square Retail Center; and project manager for the 57,000-square-foot expansion of Mesa Hall at the Marine Corp Recruit Depot in San Diego.

Prior to joining SCA Architecture, Rangaswamy served five years as a project manager for **Vasquez Marshall Architects** in San Diego, where she managed complex projects for the Department of Defense, from schematic design through construction completion. For the previous seven years, she was principal of his own architecture business. Earlier career experience includes having served as project coordinator for **Jeff Katz Architecture** in San Diego, as project coordinator for **Amann**

Group in Raleigh, North Carolina, and as project coordinator for **Ramsay Burgin Smith**, also in Raleigh.

Rangaswamy received her bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of California, San Diego, a constituent college of the University of California system, in San Diego, California, and her master's degree in environmental design from San Diego State University. She is a California licensed architect; LEED AP BD+C; and an active member of the U.S. Green Building Council, San Diego Chapter.

Founded in 1988, SCA Architecture is a full-service planning, architecture and interior design firm. In addition to corporate headquarters and office facilities, the firm has specialized expertise in retail, R&D, life science, medical, manufacturing, and industrial facilities. SCA Architecture is a member of the U.S. Green Building Council, with extensive expertise in energy efficiency and sustainable design.

STEPHEN LUCY, from page 9

incentives can quickly add up and create problems that cause turmoil and turnover. Establishing guidelines and policies that are both fair and equally adhered to by all is a prerequisite for your leadership role.

- 5) **Unwillingness to innovate and take risks.** Adapting to the rapid changes in technology, communications, and business development can leave your firm in the dust as our industry transforms itself and new ideas are brought to the table by millennials and Gen Z professionals. Failure to listen, evaluate, and test these ideas only maintains the status quo.
- 6) **Failure to act aggressively when warranted.** Being afraid to confront issues, treating behaviors passively when aggression is warranted, avoiding litigation or competition when your firm is being attacked – all spell disastrous leadership. The damage from inaction over time can disadvantage your firm and diminish its success.

“Although each of these 10 items has a different level of severity, the cumulative impact of multiple failures portends a demise in leadership and ultimately begs the question: Should you be impeached?”

- 7) **Failure to live your values.** If your firm values its culture, then protecting that culture is paramount to your success as a leader. You represent a community of professionals who expect you to follow the firm's values. Going counter-culture through your actions means devaluing everything that your firm has put in place to succeed.
- 8) **Failure to champion the brand.** As you grow in size and geographically, you must continue to engage your team and your staff. Of course, that means facetime which comes at a price when you live on the road, but failure to be visible and

accessible as a leader and team builder will undermine your firm's cohesiveness and camaraderie.

- 9) **Lack of diversity in your workforce.** Your role as a leader is to ensure that you attract quality, competent personnel who reflect today's global society. This is an exciting time to engage young women and men in the engineering profession, but to do that, you must recognize the importance of diversity and equity in the workforce.
- 10) **Failure to establish ownership transition.** Is your leadership team aging out? No new blood, young blood in your partnership circle? Your exit strategy must be carefully planned with levels of partnership that truly enable a seamless transition and must be clearly articulated. Anything less will not only be haphazard but has the potential to cripple your firm.

Although each of these 10 items has a different level of severity, the cumulative impact of multiple failures portends a demise in leadership and ultimately begs the question: Should you be impeached?

Are you prepared to redeem yourself? Are you ready to reinvent yourself? Is your leadership team on board and transparent about the values and skills which accompany sound leadership? No doubt, if you remove anyone from firm leadership, there will be fallout, unless that person has been so egregious that your leadership team and staff unanimously agree with the decision. But the failure to act may be even a greater transgression against the firm.

In the words of Thomas J. Watson, the founder and first president of IBM, “Failure is a teacher – a harsh one ... but the best.” Avoid the downside of failed leadership. Embrace leadership accountability and demonstrate that actions do, indeed, speak as loudly as Watson's words. ▀

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Leaders need to rest

Take time each day to do things that rest your mind and body. This will help you be more creative, more productive, and a better leader.



Lindsay Young

At the beginning of this year, I took a quiz about my word for the year. Several years ago, one of my friends started doing this, so I thought I'd join in on the fun. 2019 was the first year I had a word of the year. I remembered it throughout the year at various times. My word was "Love."

For 2020, my word is "Rest." For those that know me, they know this is going to be challenging. My type A personality doesn't sit still for long and is constantly on the go. That said, I believe this is perfect timing for this word in my life. We are all busy and moving forward to improve our lives, personally and professionally. Rest is essential in moving forward and making things happen. It's only when our brains and bodies are rested that we can perform at our optimum capacity.

Especially as leaders, we need to embrace the idea of rest. It helps us be more creative, more productive, and better leaders among many other benefits. Rest is not just sleep, but also stillness during the day. Take time each day to do things that rest your mind and body. Everyone has different ways to rest, whether that be reading, mediating, walking, or reflecting. When your mind

"Rest creates a better leader and better person all around. When you are rested you are more patient, a better listener, an open-minded learner, and less stressed and anxious."

and body are at rest, creativity can flow through your brain. As leaders, we need more rest and more creativity in our businesses and in our lives. We forget that resting is part of a healthy lifestyle. I'm guilty of it too!

Rest creates a better leader and better person all around. When you are rested you are more

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ON THE MOVE

AMES & GOUGH APPOINTS MATT GOUGH AS PRESIDENT; BRETT GOUGH AS CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Ames & Gough, a leading insurance broker and risk management consultant specializing in serving design professionals, law firms, associations/nonprofits, and other professional service organizations, announced the appointments of Matt Gough as president and of Brett Gough as chief operating officer. Along with CEO Dan Knise, who was elected to the additional role of chair, the two executives will lead the firm into its fourth decade.

“During their careers, Matt and Brett both have demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities marked by numerous managerial accomplishments, effective colleague mentoring and development, and strong performance results driven by a shared commitment to excellent client service,” said Knise, who is being succeeded as president by Matt Gough. “As we begin the new decade, we are delighted to see Matt and Brett take on their new roles and are enthusiastic as they guide the firm and our clients to continued success in the years to come.”

Founded in 1992 by Marshall Ames and Gary Gough, Ames & Gough has grown steadily over the years; today, its 15 equity partners and more than 40 professionals serve the risk management and commercial insurance needs of professional services clients throughout the U.S.

As the firm’s president, Matt Gough will be responsible for the firm’s day-to-day operations, including sales, marketing, client service, accounting, HR, technology, and market relations. At the same time, he will continue to oversee Washington, D.C. operations.

Matt joined the firm in 2001 and has worked with many of the broker’s design-firm clients. He also has led new business development and managed the firm’s contractors professional liability insurance program. A graduate of the University of South Carolina, he is active

in area chapters of the American Council of Engineering Companies and frequently conducts risk management seminars for clients and industry trade associations.

Brett Gough will assist in running the firm with focus on firm-wide sales, marketing, and client service. In addition to his appointment as COO, he will retain the title of executive vice president and will continue to manage the firm’s Boston operations.

Brett joined the firm in 1995 and has been responsible for business development, as well as servicing the risk management and insurance needs of large design-firm clients. Brett remains active in various AEC industry associations and is often asked to speak and write on professional liability insurance and risk management topics. A graduate of the University of South Carolina, he holds the Construction Risk & Insurance Specialist designation from the International Risk Management Institute.

As chair and CEO, Knise will focus on the firm’s strategy, future initiatives, and will continue to work directly with some of the firm’s largest clients. He also will mentor the firm’s up-and-coming professionals. He joined Ames & Gough as president in 2005 and has nearly 40 years of senior leadership experience in the insurance industry.

With more than 1,500 architects, engineering firms, and other construction professionals of all sizes as clients, Ames & Gough is the leading insurance brokerage and risk consulting firm serving the needs of these professionals. Ames & Gough also has established itself as a committed, superior resource for law firms and associations and nonprofit organizations in need of professional liability, management liability, and property/casualty insurance and risk management assistance.

Established in 1992, the firm has offices in Boston, Massachusetts; Orlando, Florida; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Washington, D.C. Clients throughout the U.S. are served by

a team of more than 40 professionals and staff located in the three offices.

MARK LANGAN APPOINTED PRESIDENT AT SCA ARCHITECTURE

Mark Langan has been promoted to the position of president of **SCA Architecture**, a San Diego-based architectural firm formerly known as Smith Consulting Architects, announced SCA Architecture founder and managing principal Dennie Smith.

Langan has been employed at SCA Architecture for more than 30 years, serving as vice president since 2009. He has been integral to the firm’s steady growth and success, having served as vice president-in-charge for many large, prestigious projects such as the Viasat campus expansion in Carlsbad, California, and the Petco National Support Center in Rancho Bernardo.

In his new role as president, Langan will continue to oversee projects ranging from office, manufacturing, research/development, retail, life sciences, and healthcare while also overseeing daily operations of the business. He will apply his 33 years of experience in the architectural field to mentoring and developing other staff members at the firm.

Langan received his bachelor’s degree in architecture from California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo. He is a licensed architect in California and a LEED Accredited Professional.

Founded in 1988 by Dennie Smith, SCA Architecture is a full-service planning, architecture and interior design firm. In addition to corporate headquarters and office facilities, the firm has specialized expertise in retail, R&D, life science, medical, manufacturing, and industrial facilities.

SCA Architecture is a member of the U.S. Green Building Council, with extensive expertise in energy efficiency and sustainable design. The firm is comprised of 25 design and support professionals.

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patient, a better listener, an open-minded learner, and less stressed and anxious, just to name a few benefits.

Think about some of your best ideas or solutions to difficult problems you’ve solved. I would bet that many of those came when you weren’t actually thinking about the idea or solution. You were probably walking or eating breakfast or showering! Your brain needs that time to process the information and then discover that great idea or solution. Even if you aren’t “doing” your job, you probably are subconsciously. That’s a good thing!

Rest is essential for everyone – leaders, employees, children, friends, and family members. Memory relies on

“Rest is essential in moving forward and making things happen. It’s only when our brains and bodies are rested that we can perform at our optimum capacity.”

sleep so the more rest you get, the better your memory is. Rest is part of your overall health. Your business and your health will thank you!

P.S. If you want to read more on the topic of rest and its importance, check out this interesting *Scientific American* article: “[Why Your Brain Needs More Downtime.](#)”

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