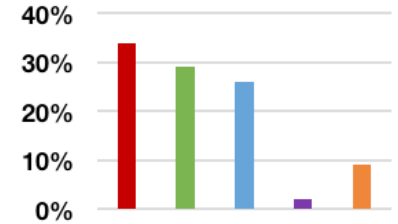


TRENDLINES

Sharing financial data for projects



According to Zweig Group's 2017 *Recruitment and Retention Survey*, more than a quarter of responding firms share financial data for projects (revenue, profits, fees, chargeability), with the **entire firm**. Thirty-four percent share the project data only with those **employees who worked on the project**, and 29 percent only share the data with the **principal in charge and the PM of the team**. Only 2 percent share the data with just the **principal in charge**, while almost 10 percent use some **other** method to communicate revenue and project profits with the firm.

OPEN FOR PARTICIPATION

zweiggroup.com/survey-participation/

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Select people who are compatible with you

“Like marital divorces, divorces between employers and employees are rarely fun for either side.”



Mark Zweig

EDITORIAL

We often talk about compatibility in the context of marriages. Oftentimes, when there's incompatibility, one spouse tried to change the other. We all know how well that works out! It rarely does. If people aren't compatible – it's a bad marriage – they often end up in divorce.

In AEC firms, that same relationship exists between employees and their managers. They have to be compatible. If not, they too, get divorced. And like marital divorces, divorces between employers and employees are rarely fun for either side.

So compatibility is clearly a big deal. What are some common areas of incompatibility that result in the employer-employee relationship not working out? Here are a few of them that stand out:

- **Work ethic.** If the boss puts in a lot of hours and a lot of face time at the office, it's unlikely anyone who works for that person will be able to succeed if they, too, don't have a similar work ethic. It's just too much for a hard-working manager to look past if an employee is coming in late and cutting out early.
- **Quality standard.** If the manager has really high standards – and the employee does not – that's going to create a huge incompatibility problem. It will seem as if their **VALUES** are incompatible. The manager will likely be making all kinds of judgments – both good and bad – about the person. If bad, there will be a huge compatibility problem.
- **Communication style.** There are many

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BUSINESS NEWS

TETRA TECH AWARDED \$240 MILLION MULTIPLE AWARD U.S. NAVY REMEDIATION CONTRACT Tetra Tech, Inc. announced that Tetra Tech EC was one of six firms selected for a \$240 million multiple-award contract for environmental remediation of radiological contaminants at various Navy and Marine Corps installations in California, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and other locations throughout the United States. RADMAC II supports the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest and NAVFAC Atlantic areas of responsibility.

RADMAC II will focus on restoration projects at radiologically contaminated sites. Tetra Tech EC will perform radiological investigations, surveys and sampling analysis, pilot and treatability studies, operations and maintenance, remediation, and other related activities associated with returning sites to safe use. RADMAC II is a follow-on contract to RADMAC I, in which Tetra Tech EC also provided technical services for the Navy's remediation programs in California and Washington.

"Tetra Tech has supported the U.S. Navy for over four decades, and specifically NAVFAC Southwest, in remediation of radiological contaminants for more than 12 years," said Dan Batrack, Tetra Tech's chairman and CEO. "We are pleased to continue this longstanding partnership with the U.S. Navy to support its critical environmental restoration efforts."

FINEGOLD ALEXANDER ARCHITECTS COMPLETE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR RESTORATION OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST: FIRST PHASE BEGAN IN APRIL 2017 Finegold Alexander is proud to announce it has completed the initial feasibility plan for the repair, restoration and maintenance of The Mother Church Original and The Mother Church Extension for The First Church of Christ, Scientist, on Massachusetts Avenue in Boston. The

buildings are city icons located on a prominent 14.5-acre site that includes a grand plaza, the Mother Church and Extension, and a number of other buildings in the heart of the Back Bay neighborhood. It is the largest privately owned, yet publicly accessible space in Boston.

Finegold Alexander is leading the project and will oversee the multiple phases. They are working with building envelope specialists Simpson Gumpertz & Heger, which is responsible for the building exterior, and Arup, which will provide electrical and fire protection services. Key elements include the preservation of the building envelope, interior repairs to address water infiltration, and life safety/accessibility code upgrades. Additional interior work will include plaster repairs, restoration of damaged interior stonework, electrical upgrades and interior painting to match original period colors.

The first phase was set to begin in April of this year, with a final completion date of March 2022.

"As specialists with a long history in historic preservation, we fully appreciate the privilege of working on this Landmark project," said Regan Shields Ives, Principal, Finegold Alexander. "We look forward to restoring this architectural gem to its original splendor while bringing the building systems up to 21st century standards."

"We are pleased to be restoring this architectural masterpiece and central place of worship to its original condition for our members, Boston's citizens and visitors," said Jack Train, Real Estate Assets Director, The First Church of Christ, Scientist.

The Original Mother Church was designed by Franklin Welch, completed in 1894.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

different facets to this. From a verbal standpoint, employees who use big words and obfuscate in their written communications will be judged incompatible with a boss who is very direct and plain-spoken. People who talk too fast won't get along with those who speak slowly. Loud talkers will be incompatible with soft talkers. All of these "differences" can be a big deal to the manager.

■ **Degree of responsiveness.** Speedy responders will not work successfully with slow responders. Ditto for those who walk or drive at vastly different speeds.

By now you might be laughing and think I've lost my mind. But think about it. Aren't these exactly the kinds of differences that get magnified for one reason or another and cause a manager to determine an employee isn't working out for them? Hey – maybe we should develop a test to check for these and other potential areas of major differences? Could be a money-maker! ▀

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thezweigletter.com/category/podcast/

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OPINION



Keeping up appearances

Your firm's reputation can be made, or broken, on the internet. Maintain a clean online image if you want to attract and keep top talent.



Randy
Wilburn

RECRUITING NOTES

I'm constantly fielding questions from clients and potential clients about the challenges they face when it comes to protecting their firm's reputation on the recruitment and retention front. There's no single answer that addresses everything that you may go through to protect and grow your brand in the minds of your current employees or even future ones. Here are three things you can do to keep your firm looking good on social media and in the eyes of those checking you out online.

First, I would recommend that you take stock of what current employees are saying about your firm. You need to look no further than Glassdoor to figure out how people feel about your organization. Every firm should have a Glassdoor account. If you don't, please visit the site today and sign up.

Once you've done this, I would encourage you to have your employees spend time on the site reviewing your firm. You don't need to coach them up, but you should encourage them to be as transparent and honest as they can be. Don't worry, if someone leaves a bad review or even mentions things you know to be false, you will have an opportunity to leave a response. I've had clients ask me if they should do this when

"I'm constantly fielding questions from clients and potential clients about the challenges they face when it comes to protecting their firm's reputation on the recruitment and retention front."

someone leaves a bad review, and I say absolutely yes!

It's kind of like owning a restaurant and someone responds negatively on Yelp or some other site about your food. Your lack of a response can be

See RANDY WILBURN, page 4



BUSINESS NEWS

UMASS MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE AND SIEMENS IMPLEMENT MASTER ENERGY PLAN TO ENSURE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Siemens has begun work on the second phase of a 10-year energy performance contract with UMass Memorial Health Care, designed to align with the health care system's master energy plan to reduce energy consumption and energy purchasing costs, while maximizing the use of renewable energy wherever possible. With Phase 2 underway, UMass Memorial is projected to save almost 2 million kilowatt hours of electric energy in the project's first year, and over the course of the 10-year contract, it is anticipated to generate \$5 million in energy savings and operational cost savings. When combined with UMass Memorial's Phase 1 contract with Siemens in addition to other efforts, it is anticipated that the facility will generate a total savings in energy and operational costs of approximately \$24 million over the next 10 years.

UMass Memorial is the largest health care system in central Massachusetts and the clinical partner of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. As an important health care resource for the area, UMass Memorial will carry out the facility improvements in two phases, while maintaining the high levels of patient care and quality that are expected by the community.

Together, UMass Memorial and Siemens

have developed a multidimensional approach to achieving the health care organization's objectives, including short- and long-term projects that will maximize UMass Memorial's return on investment. The first phase of the project included lighting upgrades in hallways, corridors, and stairwells, followed by upgrades to the administrative, physician, and patient spaces in the second phase. To review the effectiveness of equipment, examine demand changes, and make recommendations for improvements or upgrades, a Siemens energy engineer is based on-site and embedded within UMass Memorial's facilities team.

"Our partnership with Siemens through the energy performance contract has already proven to be an effective and beneficial model," said Gary Valcourt, CHFM, CHSP, FMA, associate vice president of facilities and capital planning, UMass Memorial Medical Center. "The goal is to establish a program that can be sustained for decades. As we update our patient and operating rooms, we know energy consumption patterns will change, but we're relying on our partnership with Siemens to help build resiliency into our facility."

The project will also expand to focus on renewable energy planning that includes solar net metering, a process that allows UMass Memorial to use solar power generated

at offsite, third-party facilities. When fully implemented in the future, the solar net metering program will include 12 contracts, portable between buildings over the next two decades, allowing UMass Memorial to maximize its use of solar energy. UMass Memorial also plans to build a cogeneration plant, which will capture heat created within the Medical Center and repurpose it to generate electricity for the facility.

"This project represents a great opportunity to help UMass Memorial Health Care implement its long-term master energy plan so it can achieve its sustainability goals," said Dave Hopping, president of Siemens' North American-based building technologies division. "The upgrades we're completing will help the organization address its evolving facility needs so it can continue to focus on patient care."

Siemens has helped its customers realize more than \$2 billion in savings over the past 10 years. The company has implemented more than 1,000 guaranteed performance contract projects for its customers, updating thousands of buildings with the latest energy savings technologies. Its energy services and solutions range from energy savings analysis, to implementation of facility improvement measures, to ongoing monitoring and verification.

RANDY WILBURN, from page 3

an acknowledgment of the problem. If someone is telling the truth, acknowledge that, too, and make sure you say you are aware of the issue and are moving quickly to fix it. Don't stick your head in the sand and hope that things will just go away over time. They won't.

Second, you should run a Google Alert (bit.ly/2pBPqBu) for your company to track whenever information about your firm appears online. This alert can be information on new jobs, business promotions, a new hire, or a major issue that your company is involved in. It's always good to keep an eye on things because your competition will be. Smart job prospects will be keeping an eye out, too! This approach helps prospective employees be better prepared to interview with you or determine that maybe, just maybe, you guys aren't the best place to look for work after all.


"Please use whatever social media platforms your firm signs up for and remember to be social. If you are not using a particular platform, get rid of it."

Finally, you need to make sure that all of your social media accounts are up to date and that someone is manning them at all times. I can't tell you the number of people that have said to me they're on Twitter, and when I go to check it

"You need to make sure that all of your social media accounts are up to date and that someone is manning them at all times. I can't tell you the number of people that have said to me they're on Twitter, and when I go to check it out, the last post was three or four years ago on the day they opened the account."

out, the last post was three or four years ago on the day they opened the account.

Usually, they post something like, "XYZ design firm is ready to take the Twitter world by storm!" And then the crickets begin.

Please use whatever social media platforms your firm signs up for and remember to be social. If you are not using a particular platform, get rid of it. Job candidates are increasingly using social media to do research, ask questions, and give feedback. You cannot afford to not be listening. We've pretty much seen it all here at Zweig Group, so if you need any help or guidance give us a call. We'll be here ready and waiting. 

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



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SP@TLIGHT ON: Lonnie Laffen

PROFILE



Conference call: Lonnie Laffen

President of JLG Architects (#4 Best Firm Architecture for 2016), a 110-person, employee-owned North Dakota-based firm co-founded in 1989 by Laffen.

By LIISA ANDREASSEN
Correspondent



Lonnie Laffen,
President, JLG
Architects

“We love organic growth but it’s dependent on developing internal leadership fast enough,” Laffen says. “M&A allows you quicker penetration into the market and leadership you can’t find internally.”

A CONVERSATION WITH LONNIE LAFFEN.

The Zweig Letter: What’s your philosophy on fee/billing and accounts receivable? How do you collect fees from a difficult client?

Lonnie Laffen: We do a lot of public work (intentionally for this reason), and haven’t had many issues relating to collections. We work hard to turn

out billing as soon as we can at the beginning of the month. We learned a long time ago that the best way to get paid faster was to bill quicker.

“I’m also a senator in North Dakota and came to understand that the legislature sets policy and the governor executes that policy. We operate our company the same way.”

TZL: What’s the recipe for creating an effective board?





LL: I'm also a senator in North Dakota and came to understand that the legislature sets policy and the governor executes that policy. We operate our company the same way. We have been more effective since we focused our board on policy and established our executive committee (CEO/COO/CFO) as the team to execute the board's policies. It has allowed us to be more visionary at the board meetings and less hands on. I know this is how it's supposed to work but we grew fast and making this transition from sole proprietor to a firm of 110 staff has lots of transitions. Nothing can beat experience in terms of finding good board members.

"There are a lot of options and you need to work hard to find the one that fits your long-range goals. We have been at it for 12 years and finally have a plan that is working for us. The transition will happen – even if you do nothing. You will be happier with the results if you give it the effort that it needs."

TZL: Is there a secret to effective ownership transition?

LL: I think the secret is that there are a lot of options and you need to work hard to find the one that fits your long-range goals. We have been at it for 12 years and finally have a plan that is working for us. The transition will happen – even if you do nothing. You will be happier with the results if you give it the effort that it needs.

TZL: How do you go about winning work?

LL: We are big enough to divide up that task between our market sectors. We still focus heavily on repetitive marketing and getting to know everyone personally. We still believe that who you know trumps what you know.

TZL: What's the greatest problem to overcome in the proposal process?

LL: Our clients really need a generalist, but they want a specialist. Most clients believe that we should have a unique "approach," but there is really nothing new about the design process.

TZL: Once you've won a contract, what are the "marching orders" for your PMs?

- LL:
- Service. Treat that project like you will own it when it's done.
- Be frugal with clients' money as if it's yours.
- Constantly inform your client of the process and where you are at.

TZL: How does marketing contribute to your success rate? Are you content with your marketing efforts, or do you think you should increase/decrease marketing?

LL: Our commitment to marketing is one of the things that has separated us from our competition. We are still deeply committed to the value of marketing. Social media is becoming very effective and allowing us to lower our costs.

TZL: What has your firm done recently to upgrade its IT system?

LL: We have 12 offices so internet speed is important to us. We rely heavily on IT to make us seamless in communication and work flow. Standardization is also important.

TZL: What's the best way to recruit and retain top talent in a tight labor market?

LL: Be the place everyone wants to work. We have worked hard to be the place you would love to be and never leave. We recently were selected as one of *Inc.* magazine's 50 best places to work in America.

TZL: What's the key benefit you give to your employees? Flex schedule, incentive compensation, 401(k), etc.?

LL: These are all important. We try to train our staff as best we can and encourage them to find their own success as they define it. We hire good people and turn them loose. We are 100 percent employee owned so we all share the reward.

TZL: How do you raise capital?

LL: Profit. It's been a long time since we needed anybody else's money.

"Our commitment to marketing is one of the things that has separated us from our competition. We are still deeply committed to the value of marketing. Social media is becoming very effective and allowing us to lower our costs."

TZL: What's your preferred strategy for growth, M&A or organic? Give us a synopsis of how your firm effected growth in the recent past.

LL: We've done a lot of both and see merits in each. We love organic growth but it's dependent on developing internal leadership fast enough. M&A allows you quicker penetration into the market and leadership you can't find internally.

TZL: What's the greatest challenge presented by growth?

See CONFERENCE CALL, page 8

BUSINESS NEWS

JACOBS TO LEAD CONCEPT DESIGN FOR NEW AGRIBUSINESS INNOVATION HUB IN AUSTRALIA

Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. has been appointed by Fucheng Investment Australia to lead the conceptualization, planning, and design of a regional center of agribusiness innovation in Australia. Jacobs is providing a multidisciplinary approach for the proposed development, combining urban planning, design, engineering, economics, and environmental sustainability services.

The appointment follows FIA's AUS\$100 million acquisition of a 4,953 hectare section of Woodhouse Station, a former cattle station on Melbourne's western urban fringe. Initial concept planning for the site will take place over the coming months.

"We were looking to appoint a global leader in city planning and infrastructure development to help us create something completely unique with Woodhouse Station," said Fucheng Investment Australia CEO Chris Potaris. "Jacobs stood out as the team who not only understood our vision, but had the ability and experience to deliver it."

"It is our goal to help FIA deliver a project that is viable at each stage of its development, from a core of intensive agriculture to one that can potentially become a National Employment Cluster for Melbourne," said Patrick Hill, senior vice president of buildings and infrastructure.

AECOM AND ASIA SOCIETY ANNOUNCE IMAGINE 2060: DELIVERING TOMORROW'S CITIES TOGETHER

AECOM, an infrastructure firm, and **Asia Society**, a leading global non-profit institution, announced a three-year partnership – Imagine 2060: Delivering Tomorrow's Cities Together.

Together the two organizations will leverage their extensive public and private sector relationships to facilitate a series of high-level conversations. Each forum is an opportunity for leaders in urban design, infrastructure and public policy to connect with a common goal – imagining a long-term vision for each city supported by innovative ways to achieve it. The first year of the partnership launched in March in Manila before moving to Sydney, Los Angeles, New York, and culminating in Hong Kong.

"These are some of the most exciting and

vibrant cities on our planet but they share common stresses caused by growth, urbanization and densification which are only going to intensify with the predicted level of population growth," says AECOM Asia Pacific President Sean Chiao. "If we want future generations to flourish in these cities, it is up to those in positions of influence today to lead the way and create a legacy they can be proud of."

The initiative will cultivate a connected global community of "city shapers" who are committed to sharing their experience and best practices, all aimed at enhancing the quality of life in Manila, Sydney, Los Angeles, New York, and Hong Kong.

"This is the start of a new conversation between the brightest minds in urban design, business, economics, infrastructure design and public policy," continued Chiao. "The series will explore cities through five key lenses of wellbeing, economic development, culture, mobility and innovation in project delivery. It is our belief that the right balance of these elements leads to the best outcomes for cities and their citizens."

Asia Society's Executive Vice President Tom Nagorski says, "What we are asking, essentially, is 'Where do the great cities of our world need to be, a half century from now?' And then 'What must we do now to be sure that those dreams are realized?' There are few more pressing questions for the planet's future. Ultimately Imagine 2060 will be a guide not only for the five cities involved, but for any major metropolis interested in creating a roadmap for the future."

In its inaugural year, Imagine 2060 will look at issues involving the urban waterfront under the heading "2017: At The Water's Edge" – a wide-ranging examination of how the diverse approaches to their proximity to water have shaped the quality of life for citizens of these five cities in radically different ways.

The world premiere of the five-city series took place on 30 March, 2017. It explored how citizens of the Philippines' capital city can reimagine the original ideas of a "City Beautiful", created by renowned urban planner Daniel Burnham back in 1905.

Throughout the Imagine 2060 series AECOM and Asia Society will compile the main findings from each city, build upon the discussions and publish the key insights so they are available for further input and development. The event in Manila will be followed by waterfront-focused events in Sydney, Los Angeles, and New York before the first year of the program is brought to a conclusion in Hong Kong, which is coming to terms with a new future as part of the world's largest metropolis – the Pearl River Delta.

Next year, AECOM and Asia Society will explore creative and resourceful strategies for land use by cities. The third and final year of Imagine 2060 will look at the futuristic-sounding, but all too real, prospects for use of aerial space and air quality.

FLUOR'S STORK SECURES NEW FIVE-YEAR MAINTENANCE CONTRACT WITH HUNTSMAN AT FOUR SITES IN TEXAS

Fluor Corporation announced that Stork, Fluor's maintenance, modification and asset integrity segment, was awarded a five-year contract by Huntsman International, LLC, for maintenance and sustaining small capital projects at four of its differentiated chemicals manufacturing sites in Texas. Fluor will book the undisclosed contract value in the first quarter of 2017.

"Fluor has worked with Huntsman on projects around the globe for nearly two decades and we are pleased that Stork will continue that long-term relationship with this new maintenance work," said Taco de Haan, president of Stork.

"Stork is a leader in the maintenance, modification and asset integrity business and this new maintenance contract is an example of our emerging growth in the oil, gas and chemicals market along the U.S. Gulf Coast," said Dale Barnard, regional vice president of Stork.

Stork will begin work in mid-April with about 220 full-time personnel at Huntsman sites in Dayton, Conroe, Freeport, and Port Neches, Texas. Stork has service centers located in Houston and Pasadena with additional locations planned for Freeport, Texas City, and Beaumont.

CONFERENCE CALL, from page 7

LL: Organic growth stretches your leadership capabilities. M&A stretches your cash and challenges your communication capabilities.

TZL: What's your prediction for 2017 and for the next five years?

LL: I'm always about finding work. Our upper Midwestern markets are struggling a bit with the downturn in oil production, but I'm extremely optimistic about our nation's

"We love organic growth but it's dependent on developing internal leadership fast enough. M&A allows you quicker penetration into the market and leadership you can't find internally."

economy. I think we are poised for one of the greatest runs in productivity and economic growth since the post WWII boom. I can't wait – it's going to be awesome. ▀



A new leadership paradigm

The transition from boomers to millennials is going to happen anyway, so put in a good-faith effort and make it a positive experience.



**Stephen
Lucy**

BEST PRACTICES

By 2020, 50 percent of the U.S. workforce will be millennials. In our industry, that number may actually be higher due to the retirement of baby boomers and the hit our industry incurred during the recession, when a large segment of mid-management employees were decimated.

The bottom-line? No matter how we feel as firm owners, our financial well-being is predicated upon millennials being engaged, productive, and loyal to the firm. Operationally, we need them, and we especially need them to relate to our current and future client base if we expect to transition leadership and responsibility to them.

“No matter how we feel as firm owners, our financial well-being is predicated upon millennials being engaged, productive, and loyal to the firm.”

So what should boomer business owners do?

1) Find common ground or at least middle ground.

Millennial relationships may seem exasperatingly difficult at times because our professional and personal goals may vary. Traditionally, firms have managed from the top down. We were told what to do. But that approach utterly fails with a millennial workforce. Boomer owners must alter and compromise their management approach based on an understanding of what really drives millennials – knowledge, opportunity, and inclusion.

2) Show millennials the overall firm view. Money isn't the only enticement for millennials. A top priority with this generation is honest and fair communication about all aspects of the firm. Millennials will accept bad news if they understand the rationale regarding that news. While older owners may want

See STEPHEN LUCY, page 10



ON THE MOVE

ENERNEX LEADERSHIP TEAM GROWS WITH GRID MODERNIZATION EXPERT RON CHEBRA EnerNex, an electric power research, engineering, and consulting firm, announces the addition of Ron Chebra as vice president of grid modernization.

Chebra joins EnerNex with more than 30 years of operating knowledge in technology solutions in areas such as microgrids, renewable energy integration, smart grid, distribution automation, advanced metering infrastructure, demand response, battery energy storage, and “behind the meter” technologies.

“We welcome Ron to our team; he’s a highly

respected industry veteran with an extensive network and a solid addition to our firm. He will be a crucial player in our strategic consulting and advisory services to the electric utility marketplace, particularly in the Northeast,” said Jeff Lamoree, EnerNex co-founder and CEO.

Prior to EnerNex, Chebra served as distinguished solutions architect, utility and energy IoT with Verizon Enterprise Solutions and has held various leadership positions with Schneider Electric and DNV GL throughout his career. Chebra is the chairman of the

Distributech IoT/Smart Cities track, frequently publishes articles in leading industry journals, and is a sought after speaker on grid transformation topics.

“Grid modernization initiatives have become a top priority across the country, and they are undeniably complex projects. This is a fitting time for us to bring Ron on board as it underscores our company’s commitment to lead our customers in this important and multifaceted space,” said Bob Zavadil, EnerNex co-founder and EVP.

STEPHEN LUCY, from page 9

to hold onto financial and other key operational data, millennials want to understand how the business is doing, right down to the firm’s balance sheet.

3) Define a clear career path. Most millennials want to know what the future holds. If they fit in with the firm’s values and culture, then they must be told about the opportunities that they will be afforded based on their performance. Millennials are prepared to make financial sacrifices if their goals aren’t being met, and that includes leaving your firm if you don’t understand them. Just as important as presenting opportunities, it is a disservice to not be candid with a millennial who is trying to fit in but obviously doesn’t. Be honest with that individual about his or her future.

4) Engage millennials in direct conversations. Make yourself accessible. Create and participate in mentor-protégé programs, alter your work space to create an open office environment, or simply engage your younger staff in conversation. The key is to develop a work environment which fosters collaboration and communication – two things that millennials seek.

“We were all young once and, whether we remember it or not, we were different than the generation before us. We should not approach this generational transition facing our industry as the problem with millennials, but as the opportunity presented by millennials.”

5) Empower millennials to make change. Create an environment where ideas related to change are valued. This requires the acceptance of the suggestion of change and open evaluation, discussion, and reporting of why or why not the change will be implemented. The process must also be lacking in bureaucratic red tape which may mean that you need to create a flatter organizational structure which is another desire of millennials.

6) Recognize the importance of community service. Engagement with the community is an important goal for most millennials. Therefore, providing opportunities for them to combine work with community service can be beneficial for both the employee and the firm. Initiate community service days, create matching charitable contribution programs, or support

participation in non-profit organizations. The demands on the firm can be minimal compared to the increased goodwill generated with your millennials and the public relations benefit for the firm.

“Most millennials want to know what the future holds. If they fit in with the firm’s values and culture, then they must be told about the opportunities that they will be afforded based on their performance.”

7) Provide training. Just as important as providing millennials with career opportunities is providing them with the training to develop the skills necessary to advance their careers and especially to lead and manage your firm. Learning through the school of hard knocks as many of us did is an antiquated approach. Do you really want anyone to relive all the headaches you faced during your career? Develop in-house training, utilize external resources, and encourage peer-to-peer and mentor-protégé engagement. It is better to provide too much training than too little.

8) Provide clear ownership transition. If you are truly intent on growing opportunities for your millennial workforce, and exiting your leadership role, demonstrate that by establishing a “sell date” for your ownership position. Promote those who deserve to lead, but don’t promote them based strictly on their tenure or age. Be diverse in your promotions and avoid social promotions at all cost.

9) Be willing to take a risk. We were all young once and, whether we remember it or not, we were different than the generation before us. We should not approach this generational transition facing our industry as the problem with millennials, but as the opportunity presented by millennials. Those firms that change in response to this opportunity will be the firms that are successful in the future.

Millennials look at the world holistically versus work and life as separate and distinct entities. Recognize the value of their vision and bring them into your conversations. Establishing trust, mentoring their growth, charting their future opportunities – these are steps that are incumbent on the current leadership of boomer owners. ▀

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Two firms, one team

Firms that prepare together find that the investment in time and resources equates to project wins and good relationships.



Scott
Johnston

GUEST
SPEAKER

Teaming with other AEC firms is a common strategy to win work that requires different types of expertise, size, and capabilities. What is not so common is presenting a seamless partnership to the client, both in the proposal and during the interview. “Sometimes I get the impression that teams met in the parking lot before they walked in,” said the director of a large city transportation department in the Puget Sound region.

To build a team that is more than the sum of its parts, follow these six strategies:

1) Visit the site together – early. Insights gained by spending time together at the site will translate into memorable stories and anecdotes both in the proposal and during the interview. Both teams will have a canvas to describe how their unique expertise will translate into designing, building, or improving the project. Being able to describe in the local vernacular things you saw together – the big rock, the fir tree, the gully – shows that you have invested the time to partner effectively.

One team we worked with was interviewing for a highly visible university project that featured outside study and gathering areas. The landscape architect flew in late and walked the site at night with a flashlight!

“Teaming with other AEC firms is a common strategy to win work that requires different types of expertise, size, and capabilities. What is not so common is presenting a seamless partnership to the client, both in the proposal and during the interview.”

2) Build a balanced proposal together. Often, one team will take the lead on the proposal, usually because it has the marketing horsepower or is the prime – and it shows. When the lead firm has slick

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TRANSACTIONS

KANEY AEROSPACE ACQUIRES BVR TECHNOLOGIES FROM ESTERLINE Kaney Aerospace, an engineering, manufacturing, and technology company serving Tier 1 and airframe prime manufacturers, announced the completion of its acquisition of BVR Technologies Co. from Esterline Corporation.

The combined company will operate as Kaney Aerospace with a workforce of more than 120 employees primarily in Rockford, Illinois, with annual sales in excess of \$20 million to the aerospace and medical equipment industries. Kaney Aerospace counts industry leaders such as Boeing, Embraer, GE Aviation, Honeywell, Rockwell Collins, Sikorsky, Stryker Medical, and Woodward as its customers.

Kaney Aerospace CEO Jeffrey Kaney stated, "This acquisition is in perfect alignment with our growth strategy of expanding our customer base and market presence with established product lines and proven manufacturing excellence. Our goal is to continuously provide world class value to our customers and our team."

Kaney Aerospace has been headquartered in Rockford since 2006, with additional operations in the states of Ohio and Washington, as well as in the United Kingdom. BVR Technologies, also based in Rockford, is known for its actuation and motion control products. BVR designs and manufactures gear trains, sensors, and electronic packages for

its actuators and servos, as well as the SVO-5000 autopilot actuator that is a component of Rockwell Collins' Pro Line Fusion integrated avionics system.

Ron Soave, president of Kaney Aerospace, said, "BVR complements and significantly adds to Kaney Aerospace's engineering expertise in test equipment, system engineering and product development, as well as expanding our FAA Part 145 repair station capabilities. The experience and excellence of our combined workforce, along with BVR's established motion control, indication and sensing products, provides a roadmap for growth that we are confident will be immediate and steady."

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project examples and customized content and the other firm's content is clearly repurposed from other proposals, the client immediately sees that the team is not "together." This becomes especially evident because panel members tell us that they often evaluate proposals by laying them side by side.

3) Clarify roles at the beginning of the project – and in the interview. To avoid any confusion or redundant work, set in writing the expectations between the two teams so everyone understands who is responsible for what.

"We believe that preparing a formal teaming agreement helps ensure the success of our partnerships with contractors and other design professionals. The process engages us in a dialogue that gets the key issues on the table and enables us to develop a collaborative approach based on mutual awareness and trust. It can be the foundation of a key storyline in our statement of qualifications and interview that resonates with our prospective client," says Walter Schacht and Cima Malek-Aslani of **Schacht | Aslani**, a Seattle-based architecture firm.

Clarifying roles before the interview is critical so the selection panel will have a clear understanding of what is to come. It's also something panels say teams often fall short on. You may know your roles, but the panel needs to understand exactly what the PM on one team and the assistant PM on the other are – and are not – doing.

"Teams often do not explain why the two firms chose each other and what unique benefits they bring. Ask yourself: What is the single biggest advantage we bring to the table? If you don't ask and answer it, the selection panel will have to figure it out for themselves – and they probably won't."

4) Work out the step-by-step processes by which the team will make decisions. Selection panels are trying to understand how you will work together – and with them. How will decisions be made during the actual project? The PM on one team and the landscape architect from the other should explain the processes that they use to make decisions, to the point of being able to finish each other's sentences. This is

where a third-party "expert" brought in to bolster the team can do more harm than good. Unless the expert can invest the time to prepare with the team, the panel is likely to see that person as disconnected from the team and just a hired gun.

"Teams from different firms that prepare together find the investment in time and resources pays off in the form of not just a project win, but a relationship that pays dividends long after the project is over."

5) Co-present ideas. Continuing the strategy above, members from both teams should present ideas together. While this may seem like a no-brainer, we often see one team do most of the talking while the other team sits on their hands. Team members should speak from their role, not just toss out comments.

This is especially critical in design-build projects. "In design-build, the client's goal is a balanced and collaborative team of design-builder and architect. In this balanced arrangement for success, it's imperative the architect's design doesn't drive the process and the design-builder doesn't squash the design. In this happy medium, the client will achieve design-build's goals of functionality, creativity, and quality within the budget and schedule aspirations," says Anthony Gianopoulos, principal at **Perkins+Will** in Seattle.

6) Show you are more than the sum of your parts. How can all team members use their expertise not just to solve the project needs, but to help the client reach their long-term goals? What can your combined team do that others cannot? Surprisingly, teams often do not explain why the two firms chose each other and what unique benefits they bring. Ask yourself: What is the single biggest advantage we bring to the table? If you don't ask and answer it, the selection panel will have to figure it out for themselves – and they probably won't.

Teams from different firms that prepare together find the investment in time and resources pays off in the form of not just a project win, but a relationship that pays dividends long after the project is over. ▀

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