Good morning everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.

Today, I want to talk about the negative. And it's a negative word, it's called blame. Be very careful in your organization that you don't get a culture of blame. In a culture of blame, basically, think of the definition of blame. Basically, you're saying somebody did something wrong and it really has kind of a taboo to it when somebody feels blamed for something. Because, it isn't as much as they just made a mistake, it's that they've done something bad as a person. And really, that's how blame oftentimes comes across. And, that's why it can have a negative cycle within your company. So, certainly people make mistakes. And, if you think about it on a job site, people have to be held accountable for their tasks, for their scopes, for their responsibilities. But accountability is really different than blame. Blame is sort of that direct, you've done this and it's your fault, and this is hurting us. And, as soon as you have a culture of blame, what generally happens is you inhibit collaboration, you inhibit teamwork.

Mistakes are oftentimes hidden, and bad news is submerged because people don't want to get their spanking, so to speak. They don't want to receive blame, so they hide problems. And, among all the things that you can have and be successful in construction, it's problems that get submerged or kept under the table, you need them to rise to the top, so they can be solved and they can be solved early. The cost of a problem that is left uncovered or unknown tends to multiply very quickly and can even become problems that put you out of business. One of the classic examples of this in the past was the challenger disaster, where they sent the spaceship up, the space shuttle up in very cold weather. And, they had a failure of the O-rings. Well, in the O-ring design, it was actually known that at a certain temperature, I think it was like 28 degrees Fahrenheit, that they were not designed to operate under that temperature.

Now the takeoff temperature, as I understand, it was very close to freezing. And, the engineers knew that this was a dangerous temperature for the spaceship to take off, but they were in a culture of blame. And unfortunately, the news that, that was dangerous didn't rise to the top where the lift decision was actually being made. And as a result of that, there were a number of things that went wrong and we lost the lives of several astronauts. Now that's sort of extreme, but it is an example of how a culture can sort of grow in the wrong direction. And, blame is oftentimes the reason for that. In a culture of blame, problems to not rise to the top and that can inhibit your success as a construction company. So be very careful not to blame.

The alternative to that, by the way, is to utilize mistakes as an opportunity for learning and improvement. And in your culture, if people see mistakes that way, as an opportunity for learning and improvement, they will rise to the top. You'll have better teamwork, better collaboration and more success.

Again, Dennis Engelbrecht for Digging Deeper. Thanks for tuning in.