

Hello everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with The Family Business Institute, and welcome to this week's version of Digging Deeper where we try to dive into some real construction projects and hopefully give you guys some answers that you can use back in your business to make things go a little bit smoother for you. What we identify in our peer group program for contractors is really best practices. What are the things that the best companies do, and the best companies do well?

Well, one of the things I've come to realize after working really with hundreds of contractors are the people that do three things well tend to have consistent success year in and year out. So, what are those three things that they do well? Well, number one is set the jobs up for success. All right now think about that. So that's mostly a preconstruction, even partially a business development process.

It is part estimating and might even lead into the buyout portion of what you do. But if you think about it and setting a job up for success, if you're the business development person and you deliver a great trusting, open relationship for your pre-con team to work with, well that's going to make the job go better. If they come in with less of a relationship and a more skeptical attitude, well then, you've got that to overcome at the pre-con level.

Well at the pre-con level, of course you take whatever level of trust you've been given and now you got to enhance that trust by being a problem solver, by looking forward and finding problems and opportunities, savings that can be brought to the customer, how you present those and how you communicate those and all of that goes into how much trust the customer has with you as you go through that process.

So based on that trust you might be able to implement a, I often times say at the preconstruction time with the stroke of a pen, you might be able to make or save a half a million dollars by let's just say instituting shared savings or by getting a better fee, by getting some of your costs covered in the fee along with the fee. By them better understanding the general conditions that are going to make you successful on the project, being willing to pay for the size of team it's going to take to do that. So those are just a few of the ways, but the bottom line is if that project is set up for success, then the project team can take that, and they can then hold onto that success or enhance it further. So, then the project team takes that and so that's the number one thing is to set the job up for success.

Now the project team has got it. Well the first project for the project team is really their launch to make sure that that job has the best plan, the best team. The team members are brought together to have a great schedule, one that's going to work and be cooperative. You have the opportunity to set up a positive culture for your job team, to make sure that everybody's working together, that it's a safe job site, a clean job site. Really at the launch is when you have the time to set up that implementation phase for success.

So, the third thing that you really want to be good at as a construction company then is job review. Many of you have different processes for how you might do a job review. Unfortunately, we still see contractors out there that don't review the job as it's going along or don't review it in detail and they're the ones who get the least success because that leaves it to, first of all, the best and the worst of you. You have better team members and worse team members. Without the proper support and oversight and I'd really call it more support than oversight, those B and C team members that you have can't produce a championship performance.

So, your job review is the opportunity to bring in the more experienced people that you have in your organization to review what's going on that job, financially, how are change orders being processed? Could be even means and methods issues that are arising or it could be contract difficulties, but at various times during the job, they need a checkup and they need support. That job review is really your opportunity to make sure that you are enhancing with the operations team what's been given to you, and you are leading toward a successful project.

So once again, just a quick review, do these three things well - set the jobs up for success, make sure you have a great launch planning process. And number three, have a regular review of how that job's performing. Thanks again for tuning in, Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.