

Good morning everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with the Family Business Institute and the CEO round table program for contractors. And welcome to this morning's blog for Digging Deeper.

So, today's blog, first of all, I want to credit one of our members, Preston Craighill. And many of our members will send us leadership articles and things like that, that they see in hopes that we can take that information of course and bring it to our fellow contractors later. Well, this morning's had one of those interesting little things inside of this article that really struck me as being quite important. So, this one was actually a copy of a newsletter from Wharton College or University, whichever it is, and it was Knowledge at Wharton. And the article itself was from a Bloomberg CEO, Peter Grauer. Now I had never heard of Peter Grauer, but very impressed with what he had to say. So, in talking about leadership success, one of the things he said was, "When I address a group, I try to look everyone in the eye and shake their hand."

When I saw this, I thought, "Wow, I wonder, what do I do?" And of course, I have a peer group most every week that I meet. And I was thinking back to Sunday night when everyone's coming in, we're getting together and thinking about going ahead and shaking everybody's hand and doing that. And I think I do a good job of that. But really started thinking about the impact of that. That looking them in the eye and that personal part of it, when they shake my hand, to me that tells me I'm important. I'm important to them. And I think that's really the thing about when you get in a meeting or you come across somebody, shaking their hand, you're sending a message to them that they are important and that, to at least some extent, you care about them.

So again, something that takes just five or 10 seconds, when it happens maybe can have a great impact. And so, I was thinking about job sites and in my time as a miscellaneous metal's contractor and some of the job meetings I was in and some of the action that happened along around the job site. And I thought, I'm not sure that those job meetings started with people shaking hands. So as the contractor or as the trade contractor, whichever side you are, when you enter that meeting, do you look people in the eye and shake their hands and start off the relationship that way or do you come in and just get to the business? And I was thinking about what a difference that simple habit might make in those job site meetings or again, as you're walking around the job site, and again, starting with the trade contractor, if you're walking around the job...If you're doing your job on the job site and you see the superintendent walking around to take a moment, walk up and shake his hand and look him in the eye.

And then if you have business to discuss or whatever, that's okay, but how different might your interactions be if you start with that, then they might be if you don't? If you ignore them or hope they walk on by and don't do anything. So, Mr. Grauer went on to say, "At some point in the future, I'm going to ask people to do something hard. Whether these are your employees or somebody you're working with." And then what he said is, "They will walk over hot coals for a leader who they believe has their best intentions in mind. They will walk over hot coals for a leader who they believe has their best intentions in mind."

Again, just thinking about that and then relating that back to the start of his quote, which was that starting with a simple handshake and looking them in the eyes and the connection that you maybe have there in your leadership. So just something to think about today. And by the way, our leadership development program, our bootcamp, is ramping up another session, starting in February. Be on the lookout for information about that, and really is proving to be one of those impactful programs that can make a difference in your life. So, look forward to talking to you next week. Thanks.