

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.

I was thinking about our project managers. I think as leaders and owners, a lot of times, we hire project managers, or we've had them for a long time. And we just assume that these are all fully molded, capable people who then we just turn loose to go out and get the job done. And I think from a leadership standpoint, of course, that's an ideal, right? I don't have to look over their shoulders or be diving into their stuff to make sure they're doing their job. They just do it. Of course, we find in construction a tremendous amount of variation in the performance of our project managers. And when we have project problems, we frequently trace them back to those folks.

So how can we improve upon that? So, I was thinking about most everybody knows how to do a basic SWOT analysis. S-W-O-T, SWOT. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. And most of you probably in your planning cycles have done a SWOT analysis for your company where you've identified those. Well, in one of our recent calls, one of our members mentioned that they did a SWOT analysis for a problem project manager. And it was highly effective and brought about the needed improvements. And then they realized, suggested, "Maybe we should do a SWOT analysis for each project manager." And I thought, "This is just brilliant stuff. So yes. Good idea." So, think about doing a SWOT analysis for each of your project management people.

So first of all, people development is not comfortable, right? So, we do employee reviews. I'm not sure I ever met a manager who liked doing an employee review. And I know going back to the many times I've done it, I can remember some very funny moments, but still not the most pleasant task that we probably have as a leader. And you know what? Getting a review isn't usually the most pleasant task for the other person either. So, one of our problems in people development is it's not comfortable to actually be reviewing somebody's performance. But what it does is that one time a year, if you have a good process for your review is it creates the atmosphere for that criticism and feedback that perhaps is necessary. So, I was thinking about this with a SWOT analysis, a scheduled SWOT analysis. This again, does the same thing as an employee review, right?

You're giving yourself the license and entitlement to dig deeper on that person's performance and what they're doing. And you're basically communicating with that person that that's what we're going to do. We're going to do a true SWOT analysis. We're going to do it together. And we're going to figure out the strengths and weaknesses, where there's opportunities and where there's threats. And it just sounds like a terrific format because most all of us intuitively understand what that is, and it really gives us the opportunity to look at all four ends of that SWOT analysis as well. All right. So now, we've done this. Now, and this is where, from the normal employee review, we oftentimes fall off the wagon, so to speak. We have the review, goes into file, not much changes when we do it next year, right?

But usually, when we have a SWOT analysis and we're doing planning, we do the SWOT, and then we come up with an action plan to address the issues identified in the SWOT, to follow up with the action plan. So, our suggestion here is do a SWOT analysis on each project manager. And by the way, not a bad idea, maybe for superintendents as well. And then follow up with an action plan. Spec it out, timelines, setting some objectives, some goals, et cetera, for each of these things. And by the time, the next time the SWOT rolls around just like with your own company, hopefully it's a little bit different story. So again, thanks to my client for coming up with that great idea. And good luck implementing a SWOT for each of your PMs.

Once again, Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper. Thanks for tuning in today.