

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.

Thinking back to the early days of this vlog series, we talked a lot about what it takes to be a good project manager, what it takes to be a good superintendent. I know I've told some stories of some of these great superintendents and their sayings and all of that, but I wanted to come back and focus in on what are the top habits that we've seen in these superintendents over the years, these great superintendents, that always seem to get the job done, come out of there with a great relationship with the team, with the owner, the customer, all of those things. Well, let's try to look at them. I tried to get down to five top habits.

The first one that I've always noticed is a high level of care. What do I mean about that? They care. They care about quality. They care about schedule safety. They care about the success of the team. They care about the job. There's caring and just going through the motions. Really the top superintendents care. That's simple. If you don't know what caring is, I'm not sure I can help you. But the top superintendents care.

The second thing I've noticed about top superintendents is they're driven by pride, right? They don't need anything external to keep them on task to get the job done on time. It's all internal motivation. They are driven by pride. When they leave that job site, they want to know they've done their best. They want to know they've got the thing going in the right direction, that they've done a good job. That's really what matters to them. It's how they feel. When the job's done, they love going around the community perhaps with their children or their spouse and saying, "Look what I've done. Look what I worked on."

The great superintendents that pride, that keeps them in this business and so often keeps them in this position for a lifetime, it really is about the pride of the work they're doing every day and the pride of what they're accomplishing in terms of those structures and construction accomplishments that they've had in their career.

The third habit for the top superintendents that I've noticed is they're all good planners. Now having said they're good planners, this planning comes out in a lot of different. I've seen great superintendents that do most of it in their head, and I've seen the ones that can paper the walls. They've got everybody in there working on what's on the walls and who's next and all of this and everybody understands it well. Some of those other guys work it out in their head and they have individual conversations with each of the folks on their team to make sure that everything's in line, everything's going to be there at the right time. That everybody's motivated to get the job done.

There are different ways of doing this, but the ability to actually see out into the future, to be able to have a planning horizon is really the skill that they possess. They have the habit, of course, of always using that skill to make sure that there aren't going to be any surprises eight weeks from now, 12 weeks from now. It's all going to be planned for, and it's all going to happen in an organized manner going forward. The fourth habit of great superintendents is they communicate effectively. I just have never seen a good superintendent who can't communicate.

Some of you are more introverted and some of you are more extroverted. It isn't really about that. It's the effectiveness of your communication. Again, you may communicate in writing. You may communicate in email, text, verbally, during meetings, individually outside of meetings. It isn't so much how you communicate. It's making sure that there's true communication going on. By the way, communication is two ways. There's listening and there's speaking.

The good superintendents do listen, but they're good at letting folks know what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, how it needs to be done, and even being encouraging and helping folks to get it done. The fifth and final habits of great superintendents is they perform. What do I mean by that? They hold people to high standards. That comes through in their other habits I've mentioned, but you can't hold folks to high standards if you don't live to those standards yourself. When I say the great superintendents perform, they show up on time.

You don't have to guess when your great superintendent is going to arrive at the job site. He's there before you, right? They're on time, number one. Number two, they get their stuff done. They get their stuff done, and they get it done regularly. They don't expect of others what they wouldn't expect of themselves. They also, kind of going back to their planning a little bit, they finish every day complete. You don't see a great superintendent who hasn't done his paperwork, let's just say his safety report, on the day it's supposed to be done, or his daily job report. They get those done. They get them done timely. They get them done every day. They don't build up for three or four days. They perform. They get their stuff done. And then they also get their plan done for the next day. They're prepared when they come to the job site so that other people can be effective.

Just quick recap, top five habits of the great superintendents. They care, high level of care. Two, they're driven by pride. The pride in the work that they've done and the work that they've completed. Three, they're good planners. They have a good horizon for planning. They may plan in different methodologies, but they're all good planners. Number four, they communicate effectively. Just like they're planning, they may do it in a different style, different method, but it's effective. People understand what they want and they listen, so they understand what other people want. And then finally, they perform. They're disciplined enough that their execution allows them to set high standards for others and ultimately achieve great job success. There you have it.

Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.