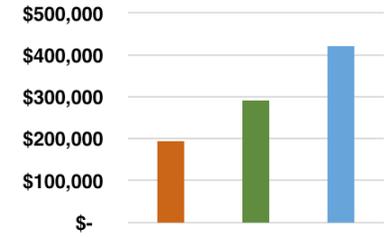


TRENDLINES

Total compensation for principals



Expressed as medians of annual base salary, plus bonus, plus shareholder distribution, plus overtime pay, total compensation for principals of **all firms**, **fast-growth firms**, and **very high-profit firms** differs significantly, according to the *2015 Successful Firm Survey*. ([Special discount to TZL subscribers: Use code SUCCESS15 to order this survey at 15 percent off on zweiggroup.com](#))

FIRM INDEX

AECOM.....	12
Cascade Technical Services	4
Current Environmental Solutions	4
ENSR Consulting.....	3
Fluor Corporation	8
HG	6
Pennoni.....	10
Salas O'Brien	2
Stewart.....	6
TerraTherm	3

That person in the room

“You’re in a meeting. Changes are being proposed. The future is being charted. Possibilities are being discussed. But the ‘Debbie Downer’ of the group sits off to the side, disapprovingly.”



Mark Zweig

EDITORIAL

We’ve all been there because every A/E firm in existence seems to have one. I’m talking about the person in the room who is completely, utterly negative.

You’re in a meeting. Changes are being proposed. The future is being charted. Possibilities are being discussed. But the “Debbie Downer” of the group sits off to the side, disapprovingly. You can tell by the expression on their face that they don’t like any of it. And if they do say anything, it’s always:

- “This won’t work.”
- “I can’t _____.”
- “We can’t _____.”
- “We can’t afford that.”
- “We’ll never get that done.”

Negative, negative, negative. And like a roofing nail in the tire of your pickup, these people slowly suck the air out of the room, deflating the collective sense of possibility as their negativity spreads like “the nothingness” in *The NeverEnding Story* (a bad ‘80s cult-classic kid’s movie for those who didn’t know).

But some people are just like that. It may make them feel smarter to always figure out why something **WON’T** work. Maybe they’re unhappy at home and taking it out at the office. Or maybe they’re seething about some injustice they perceive was done to them at some point in the past. Who knows?

The real question is what do you do about it? And what if this person is one of your fellow

See MARK ZWEIG, page 2

MORE COLUMNS

- RECRUITING NOTES: Nothing but net [Page 5](#)
- CONSULTANT’S CORNER: Becoming a blame-free organization [Page 9](#)
- POP MARKETING: This proposal land is your land [Page 11](#)

Right place, right time

Page 3



When bigger is not better

Page 6

BUSINESS NEWS

SALAS O'BRIEN CEO NAMED ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR FOR ORANGE COUNTY, INLAND EMPIRE Chairman and CEO of **Salas O'Brien** – the leading specialty facilities planning, engineering, design and construction management firm – has been awarded the 2016 EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award for Professional Services in Orange County and the Inland Empire region, Salas O'Brien announced.

EY Entrepreneur Of The Year, marking its 30th anniversary in the U.S., is the world's most prestigious business award for entrepreneurs, recognizing those who demonstrate excellence and extraordinary success in areas such as innovation, financial performance, and commitment to their businesses and communities.

"I have been blessed," Anderson said. "It is a wonderful testament to my partners and wife, Lori. We stayed focused, worked diligently, hammered through challenging times, kept great relationships with our team and clients, and always did the right thing."

The award marks the culmination of an extraordinary decade for Salas O'Brien, which has grown by more than 1,200 percent while the industry as a whole has shown no growth. With about 300 employees, including 44 employee-shareholders, the company currently operates 15 offices around the country, serving a range of clients including Microsoft, Ritz-Carlton, Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, Bloom Energy, Starbucks, Four Seasons, and numerous universities such as Stanford, Cal-Tech, USC,

LSU, Texas A&M, UCSF, and UC Berkeley. Additionally, it plans, develops, and maintains the critical environments that are critical to the infrastructure of hospitals, school districts, and all levels of government. Salas O'Brien designs "for the good of our world" – a core principle that means delivering high-quality and sustainable projects that lower construction costs, minimize change orders, and reduce operating and utility expenses.

Anderson attributes this success to the "maniacal focus on quality delivery" that is maintained by all team members and the strong business relationships that have been forged over the years. Anderson also credits the support of his family, who were in attendance when he received the award at the EY regional gala on June 17.

"I can't tell you how much it touched my family," he said. "My son (13) and daughter (11) were so engaged in and excited about the program and event. To see my son's reaction of total love and enthusiasm when my name was announced was a moment I will cherish as a highlight of my life. They totally got it and were overwhelmed with emotion. It was rewarding to know that my kids have an appreciation for the effort, sacrifices, passion, and character that it takes to make anything great happen. They have an even better appreciation for our company and the impact we are making in our world."

Anderson will represent the region in the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year National Awards gala in Palm Springs, California, on November 19.

Take your advice from Mark Zweig to-go.

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COUNTDOWN



WEEKS

Until Zweig Group's 2016 Hot Firm and A/E Industry Awards Conference!



GOOD TO KNOW

Conference registration is **OPEN!** Please visit zweiggroup.com/conference/ for more details.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

partners or in a key role?

There really are only a couple options. Talk to them. Hear them out if they'll talk. Share your concerns about their negativity and how that is harmful to the morale of the team and to them personally. Maybe you can even try to get them some help (counseling)?

And if that doesn't work – after multiple attempts (never give up easily, though eventually you probably will) – they may need to be encouraged to find a new place they (and you), feel better about. Because the bottom line is your firm's collective emotional state and morale cannot handle someone like this forever. It may be best for you – and for the negative person – to find them a new environment.

Think about it. ➤

MARK ZWEIG is Zweig Group's founder and CEO. Contact him at mzweig@zweiggroup.com.

PROFILE



ISTD wellfield at confidential site in Norco, California. This was the first site to feature TerraTherm's containerized Tier-One process equipment (pictured to the right of the wellfield), which makes use of modular, plug-and-play components, reducing engineering time, transportation, and construction costs.

Right place, right time

The exclusive rights to a new technology launched TerraTherm into a world of contamination – and that's right where John Bierschenk wanted to be.

By LIISA ANDREASSEN
Correspondent



John
Bierschenk,
Co-founder
and President,
TerraTherm

It all started with research. John Bierschenk, co-founder and president of Massachusetts-based **TerraTherm** (Hot Firm No. 14 for 2015), says that he and his co-worker at the time, Ralph Baker, were working at another company, **ENSR Consulting**, and were asked to research a new technology – in situ thermal desorption – as part of a potential acquisition.

“Shell Technology Ventures was developing the ISTD technology for clean-up of contaminated soils and sediments within the subsurface,” Bierschenk says.

However, ENSR was unable to move forward with the acquisition, so Baker and Bierschenk decided to move on their own with a commercialization plan, and ended up with the exclusive rights to the ISTD technology. They founded TerraTherm Inc., an 80-person firm, in 2000.

A CONVERSATION WITH BIERSCHENK.

The Zweig Letter: What exactly does ISTD mean?



THE ZWEIF LETTER August 15, 2016, ISSUE 1164

John Bierschenk: ISTD was first born out of the enhanced oil recovery field, but Shell found that the temperatures capable of being reached through ISTD were enough to reach boiling points of all organic contaminants (even especially nasty and historically hard to treat contaminants like manufactured gas plant waste, pesticides, and PCBs). Once boiling points are met, the contaminants volatilize and can be recovered by traditional vapor extraction equipment.

“Based in north central Massachusetts, we began as a company of two, and are now a company of roughly 80 professionals working across the country.”

TZL: How have you seen TerraTherm evolve since its founding?

JB: Based in north central Massachusetts, we began as a company of two, and are now a company of

See Q&A, page 4

Q&A, from page 3

roughly 80 professionals working across the country. Additionally, we now have a world-wide reach, with subsidiaries in Japan, China, and Denmark. We have expanded our suite of technologies and services to the point where we are now the only thermal vendor in the remediation industry to offer all three of the most mainstream and widely accepted methods of thermal remediation:

- Thermal conductive heating, which is a heating approach used in both ISTD and in its above-ground cousin technology.
- In-pile thermal desorption.
- Steam enhanced extraction.

After TerraTherm's recent acquisition of **Current Environmental Solutions**, the firm is now able to offer electrical resistance heating, Bierschenk says.

TZL: What are key strengths for an effective leader? What are your key strengths?

JB: It's simple. Unbarred passion for the business, the people who work for you, and your client are key elements. My key strengths include building teams while empowering them to perform, and setting clear expectations and rewarding results. I believe in building trust by giving the leaders what they need in the way of tools and resources to set them up in the best possible way to succeed.

TZL: How would you describe your leadership style?

JB: Lead by example and management by walking around and talking to people. I often ask employees about their jobs, listen to their feedback, and show empathy. Additionally, I ask high-performers to step up and accept new challenges.

"I believe in building trust by giving the leaders what they need in the way of tools and resources to set them up in the best possible way to succeed."

TZL: To date, what's been your greatest challenge?

JB: Overcoming organizational growth constraints.

TZL: What is your vision for the future of TerraTherm?

JB: To continue growing to fill the increasing demands of our technologies and services, worldwide. Our thermal technologies have proven able to restore grossly contaminated properties to near pristine condition. I also see TerraTherm continuing to research, develop, and evolve to reach new heights in the thermal industry through thought leadership.

TZL: You were recently acquired by Cascade Technical Services. How has that affected TerraTherm? Has your role changed at all?

JB: Being part of CTS has broadened our geographical reach and depth of resources greatly. We are now able to offer our clients more than just thermal remediation: We can provide turnkey high resolution site characterization, along with chemical oxidation, and bioremediation as integrated site solutions.

"I often ask employees about their jobs, listen to their feedback, and show empathy. Additionally, I ask high-performers to step up and accept new challenges."

TZL: Tell me about a recent project you are especially proud of and why.

JB: We recently completed the largest thermal project in the world treating more than 400,000 cubic yards of jet fuel contamination to a depth of 275 feet below ground surface and removed and treated more than two million pounds of mass.

TZL: How have you helped your firm to outperform some competitors? What do you feel sets you apart?

JB: Our quality, attention to engineering details, and ability to provide an unbiased evaluation and selection of the optimal thermal solution for a given site's conditions are what set us apart from our competitors. TerraTherm's ISTD technology is proprietary through our license with the University of Texas. Additionally, TerraTherm is the only thermal remediation company to gain certification of our heating system through Electrical Testing Labs Mark, a symbol the product is compliant with applicable safety standards.

TZL: Are you married? Do you have children? Pets?

JB: I've been married for 33 years to my wife and best friend. I have two amazing and talented children and two hound dogs.

TZL: What's one thing most people at the firm don't know about you?

JB: I recently attempted a climb up Mount Blanc which has an elevation 15,400 feet.

TZL: What's been your best vacation spot?

JB: We recently went scuba diving in Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. That was terrific.

TZL: What's the last book you read?

JB: *Cannery Row* by John Steinbeck.

TZL: What's the last movie you saw in the theater?

JB: *Everest*. ▀



TALK TO US

Do you have an interesting story to tell? Is your company doing things differently and getting results? Let us know. We'd love to contact you and feature you in an upcoming case study. If interested, please email rmassey@zweiggroup.com.

OPINION



Nothing but net

If the recent case of NBA superstar Kevin Durant can teach us anything, it's that the recruitment of rare talent takes an equally rare effort.



Randy
Wilburn

RECRUITING NOTES

The NBA free agency period that recently unfolded was quite the spectacle. Even the most marginal of the league's talents got huge paydays. But the biggest headline this offseason was the signing of forward Kevin Durant by the Golden State Warriors. His move to California helped crystallize the fact that good talent is hard to find, but when it is, it should be chased with reckless abandon. Plenty of teams did just that, but only one claimed the prize.

Everyone put on their best presentation to persuade one of the most talented players on earth to join them. The Boston Celtics even had Tom Brady, the four-time Super Bowl QB of the New England Patriots, meet with Durant in an all-out effort to bring him to Beantown. Durant and his agent spent the July 4th weekend at a private home in the posh Hamptons, where they fielded several meetings and conference calls with a variety of teams. When the process was over, the Golden State Warriors emerged as the winner of the "Kevin Durant Sweepstakes."

The Durant recruitment process is like what we see in the design industry all the time – a lot of firms going after a finite supply of great talent. Finding

"The Durant recruitment process is like what we see in the design industry all the time – a lot of firms going after a finite supply of great talent."

it is not easy and requires a concerted effort by everyone involved in the recruitment process. Firms always have to put their best foot forward and know exactly what they want.

Here are some key takeaways from the Durant

See RANDY WILBURN, page 8



SPOTLIGHT ON: Acquisition

PROFILE



From left, Meril Gerstenmaier and Dan Gerstenmaier, owners of HG, and HG partner Charlene Harper.

When bigger is not better

Virginia landscape architecture firm was acquired by a much larger engineering outfit from North Carolina, and big and small didn't mesh.



George Stanziale,
President,
Stewart

By RICHARD MASSEY
Managing Editor

The owners of what was then called H&G Landscape Architects in Richmond, Virginia, were searching for a succession plan, or some form of ownership transition, when North Carolina-based engineering firm **Stewart**, looking to expand its footprint in the Commonwealth, came calling.

"It became evident early on – in the first six months – that we could better serve our clients going back to being a small operation. Our clients liked us the way we were."

After a period of "dating," in which the firms sized up the proposition of a merger, they hashed out an agreement, and beginning in January 2015, the merger moved forward in Richmond with the marketing moniker Stewart/HG. The firm combined the bread-and-butter landscape

architecture of H&G with the design and engineering focus of Stewart. All signs pointed to a happy union: H&G achieved its ownership transition, and Stewart gained a foothold in Richmond, a market it had coveted for several years.

But the merger didn't last long. This June, the firms parted ways.

H&G has since rebranded itself as **HG**, and Stewart, still keen on the Richmond market, in September is opening an office in the Edgeworth Building in the city's trendy Shockoe Bottom district.

The big question is, what went wrong? Why did the merger go sideways in less than two years?

Meril Gerstenmaier, who with her husband, Dave, owns HG, says the merger took her firm way out of its comfort zone.

"It became evident early on – in the first six months – that we could better serve our clients going back to being a small operation," Gerstenmaier says. "Our clients liked us the way we were."



Patrick Pettit,
VP and CMO,
Stewart

Acquisition:

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George Stanziale, Stewart's president and director of design, agrees.

"They had a difficult time becoming part of a big firm," Stanziale says. "It was their discomfort with the structure of a larger firm."

For context, at the time of the merger, HG had less than a dozen employees, whereas Stewart had in excess of 100. Two different firms, two different cultures. And as they say, the devil is in the details. In terms of process, hiring, compliance, training, integration, and decision-making, the two firms just had too much ground to cover if they were to meet in the right place.

"They had a difficult time becoming part of a big firm. It was their discomfort with the structure of a larger firm."

"Culture is No. 1," Stanziale says. "We may have misinterpreted the culture."

The Gerstenmaiers, longtime owners of their firm, after the merger were share-holding employees of a much larger organization based about 160 miles south in Raleigh-Durham. Meril's title in the Richmond office was director of operations, and Dave's title was VP and director of design. At the outset, Gerstenmaier said she and her husband were fine with that. But, Gerstenmaier says, things didn't pan out.

"We thought we'd run Virginia and get back-office support," she says. "That didn't materialize the way we expected."

Though the Richmond office was winning new work in the Richmond market, Gerstenmaier says client satisfaction suffered because Stewart/HG, burdened by an unwieldy administration down in Raleigh-Durham, could not handle demand.

"We could not demonstrate that we were able to offer better service," she says, referring to conversations she was having with clients.

"We thought we'd run Virginia and get back-office support. That didn't materialize the way we expected."

While the unwinding of the merger was deemed amicable by both sides – the case never went to court – it was still a separation, and there are reasons why things turned out the way they did. While Gerstenmaier says the Richmond office never really got the support it needed, Stanziale has a different take



Though the merger with HG failed, Stewart will remain in Richmond. The firm is leasing renovated office space at the Edgeworth Building, a converted tobacco warehouse near the James River.

on the issue. He says that HG never wanted to give up the flexibility and freedom that a small firm enjoys. In the process, the merger soured.

"We couldn't be happier. Just because you are a big company doesn't mean you have it all figured out, and just because you are a small company doesn't mean you don't have it figured out."

"There was nothing ugly about it, but it was unfortunate," Stanziale says. "We looked at it as a learning experience."

Meanwhile, both firms seem to be doing fine. HG is up to 16 people, recently made civil engineer Charlene Harper a partner, has plenty of backlog, and is back to doing business like it was done in the old days.

"We couldn't be happier," Gerstenmaier says. "Just because you are a big company doesn't mean you have it all figured out, and just because you are a small company doesn't mean you don't have it figured out."

Under the leadership of Stanziale and chief marketing officer Patrick Pettit, Stewart has plans to open its new Richmond office in September and staff it with as many as 30 people with a focus on landscape architecture, civil and structural engineering. Built on a foundation of government, higher education, and health-care, the Richmond market is reliable if not explosive. Perfect, Stanziale says, for a firm like Stewart.

"We think it's a good place to expand north," he says. "It doesn't have wild economic swings. It's stable." ▀

BUSINESS NEWS

FLUOR ANNOUNCES FINANCIAL CLOSE ON MARYLAND PURPLE LINE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT Fluor Corporation announced that its Purple Line Transit Partners team reached financial close to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the Purple Line project for the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Maryland Transit Administration.

Fluor is participating in the entire 36-year life cycle of the \$5.6 billion project, which includes a \$2 billion design-build contract. The company brings robust public-private partnership experience and industry-leading ability to successfully finance and manage complex megaprojects. Fluor plans to book its share of the contract value this quarter.

The financing includes an \$874.6 million Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act loan from the United States Department of Transportation and \$313 million in "Green Bonds" from Private Activity Bonds underwritten by JP Morgan and RBC Capital Markets. Supported by contracts backed by the investment grade credit ratings of the

Maryland Commonwealth Transportation Trust Fund and Fluor Corporation, the bonds were sold at the lowest interest rates ever achieved in the U.S. P3 market, which generated significant savings for MTA.

"Fluor and our partners have successfully achieved financial close through innovative financing and proven integrated solutions approaches that result in a long-term partnership with the state of Maryland to design, build, finance, operate and maintain this world-class project," said Hans Dekker, president of Fluor's infrastructure business.

Fluor is the managing partner of the design-build team, Purple Line Transit Constructors, and subcontractor Atkins North America, Inc. is the lead designer. The Purple Line Transit Constructors team has begun initial design and survey work with construction slated to start later this year and passenger service scheduled for early 2022.

Located in the Washington Metropolitan Region, the project includes 21 stations along a 16-mile alignment extending from Bethesda,

Maryland, in Montgomery County to New Carrollton, Maryland, in Prince George's County. This new line will provide connections to several existing transit providers and improve mobility to major economic and job centers.

"Purple Line Transit Partners is pleased to reach financial close on this important project," said Herb Morgan, CEO, Purple Line Transit Partners. "This milestone, plus the recent Board of Works action approving the P3 contract, solidifies Maryland's leadership in protecting and enhancing the state's fiscal integrity by advancing a public-private partnership project that will transfer construction, operation, maintenance and performance risks to the private partners all while ensuring riders and stakeholders receive improved mobility, environmental compliance and safety. Our team is looking forward to working with Maryland communities to start construction later this year and deliver this innovative project at a fixed-price and on schedule."

RANDY WILBURN, from page 5

recruitment process that design firms can learn from:

- When trying to hire, you always want to put your best people on the job. Your hiring managers should be able to represent the organization not just from a discipline and technical standpoint, but also a cultural standpoint as well. This approach will speak volumes to anyone that you're recruiting.
- In the 11th hour, the Warriors brought in NBA Hall of Famer Jerry West to speak to Durant. According to sources involved in the process, West said a few things to Durant that made a difference. West talked about what it means to win championships and what it's like to be part of a team with great players. A good hiring manager will help a candidate understand what they're getting themselves into and why joining their firm will help the individual grow from a personal and professional perspective.

"A good hiring manager will help a candidate understand what they're getting themselves into and why joining their firm will help the individual grow from a personal and professional perspective."

- Every NBA team in the process had a plan for how they were going to approach Durant. Recruiting good candidates requires you to have a strong plan in place to ensure you answer any question or concerns that the candidate has so they can make an informed decision. Firms should highlight the great projects they are working on. You want to help the candidate visualize how they will fit into the grand scheme of things within your organization. A clear articulation of how the candidate can advance within the firm is also necessary.
- Firms should also consider having some of its most talented

"Every candidate that you recruit needs to be treated with the utmost care and should have a clear understanding of the benefits of joining your firm."

employees come in and meet with prospective candidates. They can articulate their experience and help sell the company at the peer level. Most teams that went after Durant had some of their current players in the room to speak to him about life on the team from their perspective. This approach helps a candidate to envision what life would be like working for the firm. The Warriors went the extra distance by flying in Stephen Curry, Draymond Green, Klay Thompson, and Andre Iguodala – all of them 2015 NBA champs. According to Durant, this level of attention to detail in the recruitment process made the difference for him and led to him joining the Warriors.

You may not be in the market to recruit one of the best players in the world, but you can take a few things away from the process. Take stock of how your firm recruits and see if there are any modifications that could improve the candidate experience. If there are, make the adjustments. And don't be afraid to go big.

Every candidate that you recruit needs to be treated with the utmost care and should have a clear understanding of the benefits of joining your firm. If you take the stance that you are doing them a favor by meeting with and interviewing them, you run the risk of alienating your firm from someone who could be a real asset. It never hurts to put your best foot forward at all times, especially in the recruitment process. You never know, you may be interviewing the next MVP, I mean CEO, of your firm. ▀

RANDY WILBURN is director of executive search at Zweig Group. Contact him at rwilburn@zweiggroup.com.



Becoming a blame-free organization

Blame is a form of punishment that rarely works, and removing it from a firm's environment will increase productivity and collaboration.



Gerri King

Would you rather have an employee change her behavior, become more motivated, or make fewer mistakes, because she thinks it's the right thing to do – or because she simply wants to avoid being blamed? Do we believe that people get up in the morning saying, “I think I'll do a poor job today” or, “With luck, no one will like me” or, “How can I make sure that my boss and colleagues don't trust me?” Sound ridiculous? Indeed, it is. And yet, when we lay blame, we imply that mistakes and shortcomings were purposeful.

CONSULTANT'S CORNER

If it's a matter of finding out who is at fault, once accomplished, the conversation usually ceases, and it results in not finding long-lasting and innovative solutions. So what's wrong with blame? Let me tell you.

- If it works, it's a short-term solution without positive long-term effects.
- Blame often models exactly those behaviors and values we'd like employees to avoid.
- Blame is a form of punishment and tends to create followers, not leaders, because it rarely allows for feedback.
- Blame may be a “last ditch” effort by desperate supervisors or colleagues and, thus, not a thoughtful act.
- Once we decide who is at fault, we stop looking for creative and systemic solutions.

- It doesn't really matter who is to blame. What matters is that what isn't working gets fixed.

And yet, we often resort to blame, which is a form of punishment that rarely works. It may change behavior if people care about the consequences, but is not likely to change values. Those change slowly and only when people have sufficient information and are confident that they can manage the change. Further, what should concern us most is that criticizing and blaming are forms of revenge – not a practice we should model

With that as context, here are the reasons why employees don't do what they're supposed to do:

- They don't clearly know what is expected of them.
- They don't know how to do it.

See GERRI KING, page 10



ON THE MOVE

PENNONI SUPPORTS GROWTH IN NORTHEAST WITH REGIONAL PROMOTIONS

Pennoni (Hot Firm #48 for 2016) announced the promotion of Associate Vice President and Newark, New Jersey Office Director Todd Hay, PE, CME, to regional vice president and the appointment of Senior Business Development Associate Jerry Prevete to associate vice president. Both Hay and Prevete have been vital to Pennoni's growth and development in the region, which includes north New Jersey, New York, and New England.

"Both Hay and Prevete have worked together to grow our business in this region," said Director of Strategic Growth Joe Viscuso. "They have shown tremendous effort and commitment to maintaining Pennoni's excellent reputation, profit, and growth.

With more than 20 years of experience as a municipal engineer, Hay has served over 25 municipalities, four counties, and 10 public school districts as the on-call engineer. He has supported the economic growth and development of northern New Jersey through active participation in a number of organizations and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders and government

officials. He currently serves as the president of the New Jersey Society of Municipal Engineers and is on the transportation council of the Newark Regional Business Partnership. Additionally, Hay serves as the commissioner for the Somerset-Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority; appointed city, planning, and zoning board engineer for the City of East Orange; the township, planning, and zoning board engineer for the Township of Nutley; and as the appointed board of education engineer for Springfield, New Jersey Board of Education. He is also a guest lecturer for the New Jersey Institute of Technology and the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

Prevete has been with Pennoni for six years and has been instrumental to the growth of the firm's municipal/township and energy services in northern New Jersey. Through his efforts in business development and marketing, he has successfully increased Pennoni's municipal client base and supported the launch of Pennoni's energy design and engineering services. Working closely with counties, municipalities, K-12 school districts, and higher education institutions our clients have been able to upgrade their building

infrastructure, utilizing the complete array of New Jersey's Clean Energy Programs into budget neutral solutions. Pennoni clients have also been able to reduce their energy spend while receiving significant incentive dollars for their improvements. He has also maintained relationships and secured projects with a number of New Jersey municipalities including the City of Plainfield, the City of East Orange, the Township of Irvington, Berkley Township, Old Bridge Township, and Hillside Township. He is a trustee with the Independent Colleges of New Jersey and with the New Jersey Alliance for Action. Additionally, Prevete is an active committee member for the American Council of Engineering Companies Energy and Environment Committee and for the Building Owners and Managers Association International Energy and Environmental Committee. A graduate of the City College of New York, Prevete has more than 25 years of experience in the solid waste and recycling industries and previously worked as a principal and vice president of marketing and sales for a solid waste consulting company.

Hay and Prevete will be based in Pennoni's Newark, New Jersey office.

GERRI KING, from page 9

- They don't know why they should do it.
- They think your way may not work or their way will work better.
- They realize that something else is more important.
- They anticipate future, negative consequences.
- They have personal problems or limitations.
- They lack the proper training.
- No one could do it.

Any of the above deserves attention and requires some responsible action on everyone's part.

In a blame-free environment there is a commitment to work things out. Good communication is really the key.

"Employees should not be afraid. Fear rarely motivates and it promotes secrecy. Even in the most equitable companies, it's hard to eliminate intimidation."

Most importantly, employees should not be afraid. Fear rarely motivates and it promotes secrecy. Even in the most equitable companies, it's hard to eliminate intimidation. Though people may be encouraged to own up to their mistakes, supervisors play a dual role: They are supposed to help solve problems, yet they evaluate performance. If employees go to a supervisor more than once with the same issue, it may show up negatively on their

performance evaluations. If their performance reviews are not primarily about the future, (i.e., what additional training do you need or how can we help you grow?), then there is every reason to be less than forthcoming.

"In a blame-free environment there is a commitment to work things out. Good communication is really the key."

Creating a blame and punitive-free environment is a challenge, but one worth facing. It's important to remember that a workplace without blame is not an environment without expectations, nor is it chaotic. In fact, it requires increased clarification, articulation, and follow-up. These preferable approaches are usually overlooked or ignored in a punitive atmosphere.

The outcomes of a truly blame-free workplace can be quite extraordinary. If negatively delivered criticism is removed, and a trusting, character-building, supportive environment is created – where everyone involved takes responsibility for what went wrong – long-lasting behavioral changes are generated from within. Rather than continuing to respond to external rewards and punishments, employees internalize what they need to do, and identify expectations for themselves. When those expectations are not met or mistakes are made, people are much more willing to acknowledge the part they played and take responsibility for rectifying the situation. ▀

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This proposal land is your land

Much like a “perfect” farmer, marketing professionals must take charge of each step of the growing (submittal) process, or else risk disaster.



Javier
Suarez

POP
MARKETING

Dedication, hard work, persistence, and pride are some of the most commonly used adjectives to describe the perfect farmer. There is one trait that is usually omitted, but constitutes the basis for a farmer’s success: sense of ownership. Getting your hands dirty and feeling completely responsible for the whole process of germination, growth, nurturing, selection, packaging, and distribution is the only way to ensure “the fruits of your labor.”

Much like a “perfect” farmer, marketing professionals must take charge of each step of the submittal process. Sitting idly by and waiting for technical personnel to forward “their” information is a recipe for disaster. If you truly believe each proposal is like a vegetable that you need to nurture until it is ready for consumption, you must challenge technical and management personnel at every juncture. Practitioners are used to managing projects and writing project plans that translate into boring, purely technical write-ups. The paradigm under which you should function is that you, and only you, are responsible for every single thing related to the submittal – aesthetics, format, style and strategy, approach and winning themes.

Immersing yourself in the process, researching

“If you truly believe each proposal is like a vegetable that you need to nurture until it is ready for consumption, you must challenge technical and management personnel at every juncture.”

about the services, market, and project at hand, and being knowledgeable about your firm’s relevant experience, will position you to challenge the technical staff on content. In my experience, only a select few “professionals” have not taken my challenges with open arms; to the contrary,

See JAVIER SUAREZ, page 12



BUSINESS NEWS

AECOM WINS DALLAS/FORT WORTH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S NEW PROGRAM MANAGEMENT/CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT CONTRACT

AECOM, a premier, fully integrated global infrastructure firm, announced that it has been awarded a new five-year contract to provide program management and construction management services at the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, recognized internationally as one of the most frequently visited super-hub airports in the world. The contract covers a variety of potential projects, including both federally- and non-federally-funded airfield improvements, building projects and landside improvements.

Under the new contract, worth an estimated US\$100 million, AECOM will provide full project life cycle services to DFW's Design, Code and Construction Department. The scope of services includes program, project,

design and construction management; contract administration; program and project controls; public outreach; and technical, third-party support. In keeping with AECOM's and DFW's long-time commitment to promote participation of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, it is expected that 40 percent of the contract's total dollar value will be subcontracted by AECOM to qualified DBEs.

AECOM has served as a consultant to DFW for more than 30 years, beginning with assistance on the airport's first Master Development Plan in the 1980s. AECOM has and will continue to lead a joint venture team responsible for design and design management services for the renovations currently in progress at DFW Terminal B and Terminal E, as part of the airport's US\$2.7-billion Terminal Renewal and Improvement Program.

"We are very proud of our long history of working with the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and being a part of their most important and iconic programs," said Michael S. Burke, AECOM Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. "The confidence shown by DFW in selecting AECOM as their PM/CM partner for the next five years reflects the collaborative relationship we've worked hard to build together and AECOM's in-house strengths in aviation architecture and engineering."

DFW is the fourth busiest airport in the U.S., serving more than 64 million passengers annually. Centered between its owner cities of Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas, DFW also serves as a major economic generator for the North Texas region, producing over US\$37 billion in economic impact each year by connecting people through business and leisure travel.

JAVIER SUAREZ, from page 11

the majority welcomes it because it pushes them to think about the issues from the client's perspective. Also, at every step of the way, you must ask why – why are we including this sample project, why is this the best way to organize the team, why is this task relevant, why would the client select us? Remember that you should "plant the seed" for this line of questioning and thinking at the proposal kick-off meeting and in your regular marketing meetings.

"As farmers plough the soil in preparation for sowing seed, marketers need to be invested in the business development processes in anticipation of solicitations that will hit the street."

Let's look at some of the cues we can take from farming applied to the submittal process:

- **Planning.** As farmers plough the soil in preparation for sowing seed, marketers need to be invested in the business development processes in anticipation of solicitations that will hit the street. In an ideal world, the key members of a proposal team are aware of the client's needs and preliminary strategies and action plans can be developed before the official Request for Proposal is released.
- **Customization.** No two pieces of land are the same, even the ones close to each other. They may share several characteristics, but each farmer is the only one that truly understand his plot of land. Every project (and every proposal), is different and it should be addressed as such. General guidelines and some boilerplate are useful tools, but only as a starting point in the proposal development process. Content should be edited to specifically speak the client's language and should go straight to the point. The use of "fluff" does not contribute anything positive to the proposal and it actually hurts the overall document, just like over-fertilizing the soil.
- **Innovation.** The first mentions of hydroponic farming

(growing plants using only water, nutrients, and a growing medium), were met, as many other innovations, with skepticism. Ultimately, this technique has been proven to be extremely successful. As we present "our case" in a proposal, we should not shy away from presenting a unique approach and be creative in the way the document is laid out. You need to be mindful of what will work in a particular situation, so think about the audience, its personalities, and the competition, and how their documents look and feel. Do not go overboard for the sake of being different; if you have fertile soil, use it. Hydroponics is not your best-case scenario.

- **SWOT.** Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Farmers use this effective business tool in their hard, hands-on work. They need to thoroughly understand their land's strengths and weaknesses, as well as their farm's labor force and equipment. Similarly, they need to take into account external situations that present opportunities or pose threats to their livelihood; including a growing demand for certain vegetables (i.e., kale), emerging pests, and the effects of climate change. When leading a team through the discussions that will lead to the development of a winning proposal, it is imperative to perform a SWOT analysis.

No matter how many similar proposals you have developed, the effort does not get easier. This is the nature of the business if you are doing it right. David Bly said, "Striving for success without hard work is like trying to harvest where you haven't planted." Going after a project without having cultivated the client's relationship, without planning your strategy and team beforehand, without customizing your content specifically speaking to the audience, without offering any type of innovation to stand out from the crowd, and without thoroughly understanding all the key elements surrounding the project, is like trying to set up a home garden by just digging a hole and dropping some seeds into it.

This "proposal" land is your land. Take charge of each venture. Own it. ▀

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