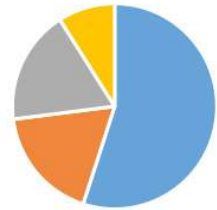


## TRENDLINES

### Firm valuation



According to Zweig Group's 2016 *Merger & Acquisition Survey*, most firms (55 percent) that went through some kind of M&A activity only conducted an **internal valuation**. **Outside accountants** (18 percent) and **independent business appraisers** (18 percent) were the next most frequently used services for firm valuation. **Management consultants** were only used for 8 percent of the transactions represented in the survey. (Special discount to TZL subscribers: Use code **SRVY35off** to order surveys at 35 percent off at [zweiggroup.myshopify.com/collections/frontpage](http://zweiggroup.myshopify.com/collections/frontpage))

## Ten ways to make yourself more successful

“Don’t forget to take care of your people. Your best people probably always deserve more than they are getting from you. Take care of them!”



Mark Zweig

### EDITORIAL

The thought occurred to me that some of our readers could benefit from a few of the lessons I have learned over the years – both on my own and from observing/working with a lot of successful people in this and other businesses.

Here are a few pointers you should try to implement:

- 1) Be prompt in all replies.** Whether it’s an email, phone call, or even a letter – be quick to reply. Everyone will love you for it and you’ll look (and be) on top of your game by not procrastinating.
- 2) Be nice to everyone.** You want everyone to love you if you can. Be friendly! Be courteous! Ask a lot of questions. Be interested. Be polite. Be nice! It always pays off.
- 3) Stay up with current events.** Pay attention to the news. Know what is going on in the world, your industry, your client’s industry, and your community. Be informed. Don’t be ignorant.
- 4) Don’t let HR problems fester.** You know what I’m talking about. Non-performing people. Trouble-makers. Morale destroyers. Move them on now and not later.
- 5) Don’t forget to take care of your people.** Your best people probably always deserve more than they are getting from you. Take care of them! Don’t lump them in with everyone else.
- 6) Get out and sell.** You have to demonstrate this personally – that you can and do bring home the bacon. This is essential if you expect other people to do it. And selling is all about

See MARK ZWEIG, page 2

### MORE COLUMNS

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# All about family Recruitment and retention

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## TRANSACTIONS

**WOODARD & CURRAN ACQUIRES RMC WATER AND ENVIRONMENT** Woodard & Curran has acquired RMC Water & Environment, a 125-person, California-based, environmental engineering firm focused on developing solutions to the complex challenges of using and protecting water. The acquisition expands Woodard & Curran's national footprint to 26 offices in 12 states, and 48 clean water facilities across the country. The combined company represents 1,000 engineers, scientists, planners, treatment facility operators, and support staff who expect to deliver more than \$200 million in projects this year, strengthening its position as one of the top wastewater firms in the country and elevating it into the top 20 for water resources and supply.

"This marks an important milestone in Woodard & Curran's history," explained Woodard & Curran CEO, Douglas McKeown. "We have grown steadily since the firm was founded, maintaining our focus on supporting and empowering our people, working side-by-side with our municipal and private sector clients on some of the most important water and environmental challenges. We are thrilled to be able to bring the people of RMC into the Woodard & Curran team, and to be able to leverage their expertise and experience to benefit our employees and clients."

"We were at a critical point in our growth," said RMC President Alyson Watson. "Joining forces with Woodard & Curran allows us to expand our capabilities and offer more to our existing clients, and it gives us a national platform to deliver our expertise in water resources to many new clients."

RMC was founded in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1998. With an impressive portfolio of large-scale projects, industry leadership in water recycling, and a strong reputation, RMC works for some of the largest cities in California on crucial water resource planning. The firm also provides water and wastewater design services to mid-size communities. Recent projects include preliminary design of the Santa Clara

Valley Water District's potable reuse program and design of wastewater treatment plant upgrades for the Cities of Brentwood and Yuba City. Earlier this year, RMC engaged Matheson Financial Advisors to initiate a comprehensive nationwide search for a merger partner that would provide the greatest benefit to both firms. Woodard & Curran was the clear choice, both in terms of service offerings and cultural fit.

Woodard & Curran was founded in Maine in 1979 to help clients address the needs arising out of the Clean Water Act. It has grown steadily since that time with a focus on water and environmental services. Today, the firm works with municipalities, companies, and institutions across a wide range of market sectors to anticipate and solve some of the most important water and environmental challenges in the United States.

"We have always been a values-driven organization," said McKeown. "Our mission statement puts our people first, and our growth and success are a direct result of our focus on hiring exceptional people and empowering them to do what they do best. RMC's history and approach are strikingly similar to our own. The match in values is easily as important as the overlapping set of skills and services across the two firms, and those shared values, expertise, and experience make for a very powerful combination."

"We made a careful and conscious decision about who to partner with for this process," added Watson. "Finding a firm that shared our values and had complementary strengths was very important to us. And we found that firm in Woodard & Curran."

The firms will integrate capabilities beginning immediately, but in the near-term, RMC will retain its focus on serving its clients in California. RMC will operate under a co-branded identity through 2017 and then transition to operating as Woodard & Curran in 2018.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

talking to people. The more you speak with clients the more opportunities you will have.

- 7) **Don't devote any energy to getting back at people.** It's all negative. You need to stay positive. Let it go and move on and be the better person in the end.
- 8) **Surround yourself with other positive, successful people.** It's crucial for you to maintain your good attitude and mental state. And they will inspire you to be like them.
- 9) **Take care of your family.** All work and no family time will result in no family. Make sure you make time for the other people in your life who you care about. It's how you spend your time that really matters.
- 10) **Take care of your health.** Cut out the smoking, excessive drinking, watch your diet, and work out three to five times a week. And get some sleep – at least try to. All of these things are essential to your physical health – and your mental health and energy level will follow right along. ▀

MARK ZWEIG is Zweig Group's founder and CEO. Contact him at [mzweig@zweiggroup.com](mailto:mzweig@zweiggroup.com).



[thezweigletter.com/category/podcast/](http://thezweigletter.com/category/podcast/)

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## Relocation in four easy steps

Building a relocation program to recruit and retain talent in the design industry should be a primary focus of any sound HR program.



**Randy  
Wilburn**

### RECRUITING NOTES

**Y**ou've been there before. You've spent time sourcing, researching, and recruiting the best candidates for a variety of roles within your company. Several are local, but the best candidate for the job may require relocation. What do you do? How do you do it? What should you be willing to pay to relocate great talent?

All of these are great questions to ask.

According to Zweig Group's *2016 Recruitment & Retention Survey*, almost two-thirds of all design firms now pay for relocation, and 97 percent of those firms pay for the relocation of new employees.

The design industry may not be equipped to relocate and transfer talent like a Fortune 500 company can. But not having deep pockets doesn't mean that firms can't come up with relocation plans that will simultaneously attract new talent while helping current employees transfer internally from one location to another.

Here are four steps to building a good relocation program:

1) Determine your spending parameters in advance for

"Not having deep pockets doesn't mean that firms can't come up with relocation plans that will simultaneously attract new talent while helping current employees transfer internally from one location to another."

candidates you recruit who need to relocate to work with your firm.

You need to consider all travel expenses involved in the process. These expenses could include the initial trip to interview, possibly a scouting trip

See RANDY WILBURN, page 4





## ON THE MOVE

**MCR HIRES DAVE RHODES AS VICE PRESIDENT OF CIVIL PROGRAMS** MCR Federal, LLC announced the hiring of David Rhodes as vice president, Civil Programs. Rhodes will oversee all operational support to civilian agencies while leading business growth across MCR's civil portfolio, including the company's long-term presence at the Federal Aviation Administration.

Rhodes brings significant relevant experience and a strategic mind-set to the leadership of MCR's civilian aviation business. Prior to joining MCR, he served as industry general manager for non-health civil agencies at CSRA. Starting

as account executive for the FAA NextGen Programs portfolio, Rhodes assumed ever-increasing responsibility – first for the entire FAA account and ultimately for more than 20 different federal civilian agencies.

"Dave is a tremendous addition to the MCR management team. His experience aligns perfectly with MCR's strategic direction," said MCR President Vince Kiernan.

Rhodes is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and served with distinction as a command combat pilot, a White House Fellow, and in numerous senior-level military positions.

Rhodes has extensive aviation experience, spanning manned and unmanned systems. In addition to his work at the FAA, he brings experience as the responsible executive for more than 100 programs across the federal civil space, including the departments of treasury, transportation, energy, housing and urban development, and IRS, NASA, EPA, and NOAA.

"Dave has a long history of providing world-class service to customers. As an example, he was recognized by the FAA for delivering the most impactful NextGen program in 2016," Kiernan said.

RANDY WILBURN, from page 3

for renting or buying a home, and depending on the level of the candidate, you may need to cover the travel costs of the candidate's fiancé/spouse and family members.

When it comes to travel and expenses relating to a particular hire, we certainly encourage firms to look at the overall cost per hire in addition to lost revenue realized when you don't have a critical need filled. Don't cut corners in this area of relocation expenses. Spend the money!

- 2) You need to factor the need for temporary housing and corporate housing when and where necessary.

You may be able to use an extended stay hotel or corporate rental housing program with new employees who are relocating to join forces with your firm. These arrangements can either be set up internally and paid for by the company, or you agree to cover those costs for a specified period and have the amount reflected in the lump-sum relocation payment extended to a candidate.

A firm can control some costs by negotiating special rates with reputable extended-stay hotels like Residence Inn, or Candlewood Suites. Obviously, there are many others, and you need to identify one that has the greatest amount of coverage in the areas where your firm has locations.

"I wish relocation costs and plans were an exact science, but they are not. You almost always have to operate on a case-by-case basis with each candidate that you wish to relocate."

- 3) You need to make sure you provide enough money for the candidate to move their household items.

Household goods, shipping, and storage, are one of the largest expenses related to a relocation. Packing up and moving can be easy for one person in a one or two bedroom apartment. Moving a family of five from a 3,000-square-foot home to another similarly sized home entails a ton of costs. There are many relocation calculators out there that will give you a good estimate of costs associated with moving a household from one place to another. These should be used as often as possible to help you determine your budget.

Two sites that come to mind are [moving.com](http://moving.com) and

"You need to consider all travel expenses involved in the process. These expenses could include the initial trip to interview, possibly a scouting trip for renting or buying a home, and depending on the level of the candidate, you may need to cover the travel costs of the candidate's fiancé/spouse and family members."

[upack.com](http://upack.com). Every factor enters into play when determining moving costs including location, distance to travel, the size of the household, whether movers are involved or if the employee will move, etc.

- 4) You need to get a good realtor involved.

Whether your candidate is renting or buying, a realtor that's a relocation specialist should be instrumental in helping you make the transition easier. The realtor can be a part of your recruitment team and even alert you early in the process if relocation will be a problem due to affordability or the candidate not finding what they like in a home or neighborhood.

I wish relocation costs and plans were an exact science, but they are not. You almost always have to operate on a case-by-case basis with each candidate that you wish to relocate. It's always best to strive for relative uniformity when granting relocation benefits to applicants or employees. The lump-sum payment model is one way to keep your relocation costs in line.

Obviously, we could go in a multitude of directions with this information, but I wanted to share what we believe is a solid foundation for building a relocation program for your firm.

Please reach out to me at Zweig Group for further clarification and help with your relocation process. Our team has been in the business of recruitment consulting for almost three decades, and we feel like we've seen just about everything. ■

RANDY WILBURN is director of executive search at Zweig Group. Contact him at [rwilburn@zweiggroup.com](mailto:rwilburn@zweiggroup.com).



## Create a healthy workplace: Part two

Over the years, we have developed work styles that are not good for our physical, mental, or emotional health, but that can be changed.



Leigh  
Stringer

GUEST  
SPEAKER

**T**aking these tips to heart can really change the health of the workplace and the employees in it. Studies show that unhealthy work habits, like staring at computer screens and rushing through fast-food lunches are taking their toll in the form of increased absenteeism, lost productivity, and higher insurance costs – but it doesn't have to be that way. Companies such as Google, Apple, Aetna, and Johnson & Johnson have used innovative techniques to incorporate healthy habits and practices into the workday and into their culture – with impressive ROI.

So how can we improve the health of our workplace? Here's a comprehensive list:

“Taking these tips to heart can really change the health of the workplace and the employees in it.”

**1) Stay home when you are sick.** When people come into the workplace sick, they are very likely spreading their ailments to colleagues, which reduces organizational productivity. As tempting as it is for you to “power through” and minimize

sick days, the overall health risk is not worth it. Researchers from the University of Arizona in Tucson placed a tracer virus on commonly touched objects such as a doorknob or tabletop in workplaces. At multiple time intervals, the researchers sampled a range of surfaces including light switches, countertops, sink tap handles, and push buttons. They found that between 40 and 60 percent of the surfaces were contaminated within two to four hours. This may be a reason to adopt a “work from home” policy, if you are looking for one. Beyond that, everyone should frequently wash their hands.

See LEIGH STRINGER, page 8



# SPOTLIGHT ON: Tower

## PROFILE



## All about family

Michigan firm takes the extra steps to create a family atmosphere, and that translates into employee retention, quality work, and client satisfaction.

By TOWERPINKSTER  
Best Firm #1 Architecture for 2016

Our firm culture is at the center of all we do and is what makes TowerPinkster unique! Our positive, fun work environment is a major factor in our ability to retain top talent, produce quality work, and exceed client expectations. Every employee takes part in defining who we are and what we do, and this philosophy has created (what we like to call) a “family” culture.

“Every employee takes part in defining who we are and what we do, and this philosophy has created (what we like to call) a ‘family’ culture.”

and our leadership team. The CAAT committee, consisting of employees from various backgrounds and disciplines, meets monthly to brainstorm culture-building ideas and plan activities. Through various endeavors our team members establish strong bonds and personal connections with one another. The CAAT group develops programs and procedures, such as:

- **Employee surveys.** Various surveys are hosted throughout the year to understand the needs, desires, and interests of all our team members.
- **Incentive-based wellness program.** Employees participate in our Wellness Reimbursement program to receive incentives and support for many health-related activities.
- **Monthly lunch events.** All employees enjoy lunch together which offers opportunities to socialize and connect. We often play games like trivia, compete in races, and perform office scavenger hunts. We also have cook-offs and baking competitions.
- **Family-friendly events.** We have organized family-

To help build and sustain this family culture, we rely on both our Culture Advisory Action Team







TowerPinkster employees pose for a group photo.

friendly events, such as office trick-or-treating, family picnics, and hockey and baseball game outings.

- **Other contests/activities.** We hold walking challenges, and Halloween costume and pumpkin carving contests, and even an ugly sweater contest during the holidays.

“We have made our company culture deliberate by giving every employee the chance to provide input, offer feedback, and be an active participant in the creation of our family culture.”

We believe that focusing on our family culture has resulted in high employee retention because people truly enjoy coming to work every day. Of course, we must also produce quality results, which require highly skilled, motivated, and passionate employees. To accomplish this strategy, we take a talent-focused approach to developing individuals and teams. At the core of this philosophy is an annual team training event. We close the office for an entire day and through our partnership with an outside leadership development and team-building consultant, the day is spent creating personal connections, strengthening teamwork, increasing our

See TOWERPINKSTER, page 8



TowerPinkster employees work hard and play hard.

LEIGH STRINGER, from page 5

**2) Install “circadian” lighting.** Our internal circadian rhythm or biological clock regulates the timing of periods of sleepiness and wakefulness throughout the day. This rhythm is controlled by a part of the brain at the back of the eye, which is triggered by changes in natural daylight. Unfortunately for most of us, we spend 90 percent of our day indoors, which plays havoc with our sleep cycle. To combat this, try the following:

- Consider installing a circadian lighting system designed to trigger wakefulness.
- If you’re on a budget, try screwing a “daylight” LED bulb into your office task light. You will be shocked by how much better you feel after just a few minutes of use, and you will likely sleep better at night!

**3) Bring your pet to work.** Bring in puppies or kittens to work for a few hours. Sam Whiteside, the chief wellness officer at The Motley Fool will bring in puppies when she knows a team is working hard on a deadline, to lighten things up.

- Create a “bring your pet to work day.”
- Allow pets to come to picnics or events.
- Get a mascot. Maybe it doesn’t make sense for every employee to bring in their dog or cat, but having just one pet might be just the ticket. If you’ve ever been to the Hotel Algonquin in New York (or read *The Algonquin Cat*), you know this can be a competitive advantage.

“Studies show that unhealthy work habits, like staring at computer screens and rushing through fast-food lunches are taking their toll in the form of increased absenteeism, lost productivity, and higher insurance costs – but it doesn’t have to be that way.”

**4) Lead by example.** One of the most influential tools to encourage healthy behavior in your organization is you. Consider doing the following:

- Adopt healthy changes into your own life that will give you the knowledge you need as a leader to convince others to change.
- Eat better and bring in good, healthy foods to share with your team when appropriate.

TOWERPINKSTER, from page 7

communication and building leadership skills.

At the individual level, we incorporate the use of strength assessments to reveal each employee’s top strengths. We aim to amplify those strengths and align them to the individual’s role, responsibilities, and passions. Our STEPS program (Strength and Talent Enhancement Performance System) is designed with a forward-thinking approach. Personal and professional goals, in addition to company goals, are created annually to ensure employees are challenged and have the support they need to be successful.

- Integrate movement into your day by organizing a stand-up meeting, walking while you take a conference call, or trying out an “exercise desk.”
- Pay attention to your sleep cycle and stop sending your team texts at 10 p.m.

“Companies such as Google, Apple, Aetna, and Johnson & Johnson have used innovative techniques to incorporate healthy habits and practices into the workday and into their culture – with impressive ROI.”

**Bonus points for managers and leaders! So you’ve tried everything mentioned before, but looking for something more? Here are a few extra healthy strategies to mull over:**

- 1) If you are looking to relocate the office, consider having it by a park or public transportation.** The proximity of your home or office to parks and other recreational facilities is consistently associated with higher levels of physical activity and healthier weight status. The same goes for proximity to public transit – there is a link between access to public transportation and physical activity, since transit use typically involves walking to a bus or subway stop.
- 2) Give your workplace a healthy stamp of approval.** Two tools that have received a great deal of buzz lately are the WELL Building Standard by Delos, and the FITWEL Standard developed by the Centers for Disease Control and U.S. General Services Administration, and administered by the Center for Active Design.
- 3) Get rid of email.** I spoke with a leader that adopted Slack and Asana for internal communications. He claims to have recaptured at least five hours a week and saved “a day” of his team’s time a week due to more efficient communication and streamlined meetings. He still uses email for external communication, but inter-office email was dramatically reduced. ▀

LEIGH STRINGER is senior workplace expert for **EYP Architecture & Engineering**. Learn more at [leighstringer.com](http://leighstringer.com). She lives in Washington, D.C.

**TowerPinkster**  
ARCHITECTS | ENGINEERS

We have made our company culture deliberate by giving every employee the chance to provide input, offer feedback, and be an active participant in the creation of our family culture. ▀





## The importance of failure

The winning percentage in the A/E industry is not that good, so it's vital that you learn how to take a punch and get back up to fight again!



**Matt  
Crafton**

**ENGINEERING  
INSIGHTS**

**Y**ou've probably heard the quotes about Michael Jordan's career shooting percentage being about 50 percent, meaning he missed 50 percent of his shots. Babe Ruth's career batting average was 0.342, meaning he didn't get a hit two-thirds of his time at the plate. And, after a 108-year drought, the Chicago Cubs finally won the World Series last year.

Like many of you, I learned significant life lessons from my youth sports experiences and from the coaches I had. Sports will (or should), teach kids about hard work, hustle, teamwork, and picking yourself up when you've been knocked down. Learning those lessons can be a painful process, but well worth it when those kids turn into responsible, productive adults.

"I learned significant life lessons from my youth sports experiences and from the coaches I had."

My sports experience also taught me that I really like to win (and I really hate losing). That competitive drive to win certainly continues to play out in our firm when we chase new projects.

It's a great feeling to get that phone call, email, or letter saying, "Congratulations, your firm has been selected." As a business leader, we know that winning means we get to do what we love, and it also means revenue to keep our people employed. It also just feels good – that affirmation of, "We won!"

But like Michael Jordan or Babe Ruth, more often than not in the A/E industry you don't win. According to Zweig Group research, the median hit rate to get shortlisted on proposals submitted is 22 percent, and the median win rate is 41 percent of those shortlisted. Or, stated negatively, firms don't get shortlisted on 78 percent of the projects they pursue, and when they do make the shortlist, they lose 59 percent of the time! That's incredible!

See MATT CRAFTON, page 10



## ON THE MOVE

**JAMES CURRY NAMED PROJECT MANAGER AT ATWELL** Consulting, engineering, and construction services firm **Atwell, LLC** announced Jim Curry has joined the firm as project manager, Land Solutions. He will manage projects and teams in the oil and gas, renewable energy, and electric transmission and distribution markets focused on land use, right of way, and land due diligence services.

Curry has more than 28 years of power, oil and gas industry experience with extensive experience managing large-scale diverse projects in the oil and gas and electric transmission industries throughout the United States. He also has expertise negotiating surface use agreements, managing FERC projects, and resolving conflicts.

Curry is an active member of the International Right of Way Association, the American Association of Petroleum Landmen, and the Project Management Institute. Over the last few years, he performed due diligence or managed the due diligence of more than 10,000 miles

of right of way for pipeline, electric line and access, and almost 500 megawatts of wind energy facilities.

“We are pleased that Jim has joined Atwell. He is a veteran project manager with large-scale project expertise,” said Atwell Vice President Matthew Bissett. “His national project management experience will serve us well as we continue to expand our Land Solutions services throughout the western United States.”

**SAIC APPOINTS NEW CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER** **Science Applications International Corp.** announced the appointment of Charles Mathis as executive vice president and chief financial officer. Interim CFO Maria Bishop will resume her duties as corporate controller. Mathis will report to CEO Tony Moraco.

Mathis joins SAIC from ScanSource Inc., a global public company focused on technology services and products, where he was executive vice president and CFO since 2012. Prior to

joining ScanSource, Mathis was executive vice president and CFO for Force Protection Inc., based in South Carolina, where he led strategic and operational improvements of the global defense company. He was also the CFO for Fort Worth-based EFW, Inc.

“Charlie has broad global experience in the defense, technology, and financial sectors,” Moraco said. “We are pleased to welcome Charlie to our executive leadership team and know that his experience in those sectors, as well as his focus on strategic growth, will be a great fit for SAIC. I also want to thank Maria for an exemplary job as interim CFO for the past four months.”

After earning his B.S. from Wake Forest University, Mathis served as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and earned an MBA from the University of Chicago. He has extensive experience in mergers and acquisitions, finance and accounting, financial controls, and U.S. government contracting and compliance.

MATT CRAFTON, from page 9

If you’re going to stay in this industry, you better be able to take a punch and get back up to fight again!

There are numerous resources available to help A/E firms market themselves and win more work, including those at Zweig Group. A recent visit to the Zweig website shows a calendar full of seminars and webcasts with such titles as AEC Business Development Training, or Real Marketing and Branding for AEC Firms, and Growing a Profitable and Entrepreneurial AEC Firm, not to mention books like the *A/E Winning Presentations Cookbook*.

And that’s just a brief start. There are marketing consultants you can hire to help your firm draft a marketing plan and execute it. You can improve your staff’s personal business development skills by investing in training or joining associations designed to do that. Bottom line – if you want to improve your winning percentage, there are tons of resources available to help do that.

“Sports will (or should), teach kids about hard work, hustle, teamwork, and picking yourself up when you’ve been knocked down. Learning those lessons can be a painful process but well worth it when those kids turn into responsible, productive adults.”

But, what do you do when you don’t win? Once you get through the emotions of losing (akin to any grief or loss) – denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance – what comes next? Here are my suggestions, from personal experience:

“My sports experience also taught me that I really like to win (and I really hate losing). That competitive drive to win certainly continues to play out in our firm when we chase new projects.”

- 1) Don’t express your anger in a way that you regret later.** There will be other proposals and opportunities with that client, and you don’t want to burn bridges.
- 2) Try to get constructive feedback from the owner.** Sometimes that is harder than it sounds, because either they don’t want to offend you, or they don’t want to admit some factor that played into their decision. Ask if there was something that distinguished the winning firm, and if there is anything your firm can do better next time. If they offer feedback, thank them for it.
- 3) Have some sort of post mortem with your team, even if it’s informal.** Ask for honest opinions from your team, and then learn from the experience. Your next proposal or presentation should be better than the last.
- 4) Stay encouraged!** Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and start all over again. It can be a real emotional letdown when you don’t win. But don’t let it keep you down. Get ‘em next time!

It’s no fun not winning the project, but after the letdown, there are lessons to be learned and improvements to be made in hopes of winning the next one. As a leader, commit your firm to learning from failure. ▀

MATT CRAFTON is president and CEO of **Crafton Tull**, an architecture, engineering, and surveying firm based in Rogers, Arkansas. He can be reached at matt.crafton@craftontull.com.





## Recruitment and retention

Hiring good people isn't easy, and hanging onto them is just as difficult. When you find the right person, offer an excellent benefits package.

By GALE ASSOCIATES INC.  
Best Firm #4 Multidiscipline for 2016

**R**ecruitment and retention play a big part in the success of any professional services firm. Recruiting individuals with specific experience, the ability to positively interact with our clients, and thrive in our corporate culture is no small feat. When we do find the right person and invest in their training, we want to retain them. We are constantly reviewing and enhancing our benefits in an effort to compete with other companies to acquire and keep the best talent out there.

**RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES.** Gale's recruitment techniques include using headhunters and placement agencies, attending college fairs, placing ads in industry publications and on websites, and giving referral bonuses to our employees. We encourage all of our employees to be active in industry groups, leading to new contacts and possible future employees. We highlight our benefits, impressive project experience, and positive, supportive culture on

"We are constantly reviewing and enhancing our benefits in an effort to compete with other companies to acquire and keep the best talent out there."

our website. Gale is active on social media and uses LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and the Gale blog to cast a wider net and reach more people. Employees are encouraged to write and publish articles, and give educational presentations at various conferences. Not only does this enhance our influence among our client groups, it also increases our visibility among potential candidates.

### **BENEFITS, INCENTIVES, AND RETENTION:**

■ **Insurance.** First day health, dental, life, and disability coverage.

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## BUSINESS NEWS

### P+R ARCHITECTS CHANGES NAME TO RETAIL DESIGN COLLABORATIVE, REFLECTS LEADERSHIP IN RETAIL ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN INDUSTRY

Last month, 37-year-old architectural firm **P+R Architects** (Perkowitz + Ruth Architects) renames to **Retail Design Collaborative**. The decision to rename and rebrand reflects the firm's creative and forward-thinking approach towards the future of retail.

The name change has been several years in the making and is driven by the firm's desire to better align their brand and business positioning with all aspects of the retail realm. As e-commerce and traditional brick-and-mortar retail continues to find a balance, more emphasis is being placed on the experiential interaction within the retail environment. More so than in the past, the line between tenant typologies is blurring and retail is engaging with hospitality, creative office, food and beverage, entertainment and residential in ways it never has before. Retail Design Collaborative is at the forefront of shaping this ever changing, all-encompassing evolution of retail.

Retail Design Collaborative provides leadership in practice of architecture, planning, and interior design. In collaboration with

clients, cities and communities, Retail Design Collaborative creates memorable places for where people can gather, shop, work and play.

"We are excited to announce our firm's rename to Retail Design Collaborative. Our firm has been a leader in the retail architectural industry nationwide since 1979," said Steve Ruth, founder and CEO of Retail Design Collaborative. "As architects, we have experienced many moments of evolution within the retail and commercial markets. This rename reflects our deep commitment and passion to being thought leaders in all aspects of the retail realm."

Retail Design Collaborative is an award-winning leader in the retail design and architectural industry. Their work spans many markets representing both developers and tenants on a diversified range of projects including: malls, store design and rollout, hospitality, fitness, cinemas and entertainment, creative office, lifestyle centers, town centers and food-related projects. With 37 years of design expertise, the firm's depth and excellence in all aspects of retail allows them to take a holistic approach to designing for the retail experience.

"Our obligation at Retail Design Collaborative is to engage our clients in a dialogue about consumer and retail trends through thoughtful design solutions while working in a collaborative spirit," said David Sheldon, vice president of brand strategy at Retail Design Collaborative. "Our rename and rebrand is as much about a culture-forward initiative internally as it is a response to the market influences externally."

In addition, Retail Design Collaborative recently relocated their offices in Downtown Long Beach, repositioning a former Nordstrom Rack into their new creative office space. This move is a deliberate step for the firm through engagement with staff in a collaborative, creative and open environment. The move also showcases the firm's ability to reposition vacant spaces into creative new uses, something Retail Design Collaborative does often as anchor tenants continue to evolve.

"Retail Design Collaborative's positioning is aimed at being proactive in the retail industry. It's about solving complex architectural, planning and interior challenges to better service our clients, consumers and cities," added Ruth.

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- **Vacation accrual.** Three weeks, four weeks, and five weeks based on years of service.
- **Sick time.** Eight days per year with 100 percent buyback for unused time.

"Employees are encouraged to write and publish articles, and give educational presentations at various conferences. Not only does this enhance our influence among our client groups, it also increases our visibility among potential candidates."

- **401(k).** Matches up to 3 percent of annual, eligible compensation.
- **Profit sharing.** Structured to reward longevity within the firm.
- **Training and tuition reimbursement.** 100 percent up to \$5,000 annually plus technical and business training based on staff's career path.
- **Dependent care.** Tax free contribution up to \$5,000 per year to assist with the high cost of child care.
- **Bonus program and profit distribution.** Based on firm profitability, including a 53rd week of salary, and incentives for utilization goals.
- **Corporate culture.** Employees spend a lot of time at work.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS



For staff to want to come to work, it can't be all work. Our active Human Resources Committee plans, schedules, and hosts events including an annual clambake, several cookouts, our annual Halloween party, bowling outings, indoor golf tournaments, Las Vegas nights, lunches, breakfasts, and cocktail parties. We also have a great tradition of holding a family/children's holiday party with gifts, entertainment, and refreshments every December.

- **Charity.** Giving back to our community is a priority at Gale. We hold an annual pajama drive for children taken into the Department of Children and Family's care. We hold can drives. We collect toys for needy children and gifts for teens during the holidays. Gale compensates employees for eight hours of community service performed during the work week. Employees can choose their own charities.

"Gale compensates employees for eight hours of community service performed during the work week. Employees can choose their own charities."

- **Community.** We also foster and embrace a strong sense of caring at Gale. When an employee is going through a tough time, we help in any way we can with transportation costs, food delivery, etc. ▀