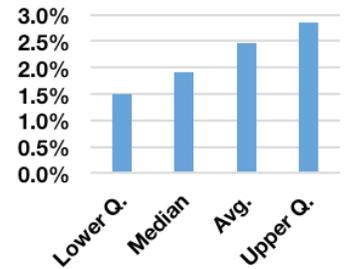


TRENDLINES

401(k) matches



According to Zweig Group's 2017 *Policies, Procedures & Benefits Survey*, firms' 401(k) contributions as a percentage of net service revenue have remained fairly consistent over the last few years. This year, most firms contributed between 1.5 and 2.9 percent of NSR to 401(k) match programs. The median this year was 1.9 percent of NSR, up just a tenth of a percent from last year's median value. (Special discount to TZL subscribers: Use code **SRVY35off** to order surveys at 35 percent off at zweiggroupp.myshopify.com/collections/frontpage)

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Who stays and who goes?

“Loss of a large client or two, completion of a major project or projects, or just plain old indiscriminant hiring that has gone on for too long results in too much labor for the revenue to support. Cuts have to be made.”



Mark Zweig

EDITORIAL

In spite of an incredibly healthy economy and high demand for AEC services throughout the land, there are still individual companies out there that are struggling financially for one reason or another. And inevitably, since labor is the largest single expense, a discussion of who stays and who goes ensues.

As a business owner, these are among the most agonizing and painful decisions one ever has to make. The worst day of my business career was the day I, along with several other second-tier managers, had to let go of about 30 people in a single day back in 1987. It was terrible.

That said, sometimes it is inevitable that a firm finds itself overstaffed. Loss of a large client or two, completion of a major project or projects, or just plain old indiscriminant hiring that has gone on for too long results in too much labor for the revenue to support. Cuts have to be made.

Here are the things I look at when deciding who stays and who goes:

- 1) Does the person sell work for other people to do?** People who sell work and keep others besides themselves busy are valuable. We probably don't want to cut them or we'll end up in even worse shape than we are at present.
- 2) Does this person have critical client relationships that would be jeopardized if he or she wasn't there any longer?** Again, similar to the situation above. We don't want to cut off our nose to spite our face. Big client relationships have to be maintained or we could face a downward spiral of reducing costs and losing even more revenue.

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ON THE MOVE

DESIGN LEADER LANCE HOSEY JOINS HED Harley Ellis Devereaux announced that Lance Hosey, FAIA, LEED Fellow, has joined the firm as architecture and design leader.

A recognized leader in, and advocate for, sustainable design, Hosey will lead design efforts for the firm's San Diego office and lead the firm's initiatives for design excellence.

Lance is the former chair of the LEED Advisory Committee and has served on the U.S. Green Building Council Social Equity Working Group. Currently, he serves on the AIA Committee on the Environment Advisory Group, and he is one of only 30 people in the world who are Fellows with both the American Institute of Architects and the USGBC. Lance's latest book, *The Shape of Green: Aesthetics, Ecology, and Design*, the first to study the relationships between sustainability and beauty, won a 2013 New York Book Show award and was a 2014 finalist for "Book of the Year" with the U.K.'s Urban Design Awards.

"We are looking forward to leveraging Lance's extensive background and leadership in design," said J. Peter Devereaux, CEO of HED. "The addition of Lance further reinforces our commitment to design excellence across the firm. In addition, we're excited to bring his design talents to the San Diego market."

Prior to joining HED Hosey was a design director with **William McDonough + Partners** and chief sustainability officer with two of the world's largest design firms. Earlier in his career, he played key design roles with **Rafael Viñoly Architects** and with **Gwathmey Siegel & Associates**. His clients have included some of the world's most innovative organizations, including NASA, Google, SC Johnson, Palm, and others. His design work with employers and alone has won many awards and has been published extensively. He is a regular contributor to the *Huffington Post*.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

- 3) Does this person have such a following that it will demotivate too many other people to cut them?** Some people are like that. They are so popular and so loved that cutting them will destroy the morale of 20 other people. Proceed with caution on cutting them.
- 4) Does this person have some terrible personal situation that will make management look heartless to cut him or her?** Maybe they are sick, or their spouse just left them with three kids, or their house burned down recently and they lost everything. You can say this isn't a business issue – and at some point, it isn't – yet it is the reality that you don't want to look inhumane or your entire staff could lose faith in management having their best interests at heart.
- 5) Does this person have a strong work ethic and willingness to learn?** If so, you may not want to cut them. These attributes are too rare and too valuable. Find something for them to do to earn their keep as long as you can.
- 6) Does this person have any particularly annoying personality traits or habits that bother other people?** Again, you could easily say, "That's not a business issue." But it is. Too many smoke breaks, bad personal hygiene, too many verbal gaffes that it is embarrassing – all of these things can be problems. When cuts get made, it is hard not to think about them.
- 7) Is this person peaked out in terms of their potential?** They may be candidates for cutting. Every firm needs people who can move up to the next level. Those who are maxed out may be candidates to cut.
- 8) Does this person have a skill that no one else in the firm possesses?** If so, it may not be possible to cut them. Too many other jobs are riding on their unique skill, qualifications, and credentials.
- 9) Will cutting this person actually improve morale?** Some people are so difficult to work with that even if they are competent they will inevitably be the first to be put on the "cut" list. You always know who these people are.
- 10) Is this person going to be OK if he or she does lose their job?** Personal stuff does come into play here. You may not be able to afford to consider this at some point depending on your financial situation. These are some of the most difficult cases.

One thing is for sure – cutting people is never easy. That said, it is too often delayed by owners and managers of AEC firms, and this could result in even more cuts being made later on. ▀

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



thezweigletter.com/category/podcast/

THE ZWEIG LETTER

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PROFILE



From Madrid to Istanbul

Hill International cut its teeth on international public-private partnerships in Spain, and is now using that experience to excel in Turkey.

By RICHARD MASSEY
Managing Editor



Serdar Gucar,
Managing
Director, Hill
International

As the massive healthcare buildout in Turkey continues, **Hill International** (Hot Firm #31 for 2016) finds itself in a familiar position – out front and thriving in a public-private partnership.

“Our focus is on quality monitoring and verification services.”

Using lessons it learned working in the healthcare industry in Spain, where the public-private model is more prevalent, Hill transitioned into important contracts in Turkey, where the public-private model is still relatively new.

The powerhouse firm inked two contracts last year with MR, a joint venture company of Meridium, and Rónesans Healthcare Investment. The affiliated projects are the Yozgat City Hospital, a 475-bed facility, and the Adana Integrated Health Campus, with 1,550 beds.

“Our focus is on quality monitoring and verification services,” says Serdar Gucar, managing direc-

tor of Turkey and CIS for Hill International. “We have full-time people on site for each of the projects and they are all coordinated by our project director from Istanbul. We also provide part-time expert assistance from our colleagues in Spain, who have dealt with many PPP model projects there.”

The sharing and transfer of home-grown experience from Hill’s Madrid office to its counterparts in Istanbul is not the first, nor will it be the last, for the company. The benefits of such efforts will come to bear as Hill targets growth in certain key sectors globally, with healthcare and building projects under the PPP model being two of them.

“We have full-time people on site for each of the projects and they are all coordinated by our project director from Istanbul.”

Availability-based social PPP projects are new in Turkey and there is little local experience with re-

See HILL INTERNATIONAL, page 4

ON THE MOVE

BRIDGE ARCHITECTS MAX NASAB AND MICAH DODSON JOIN FINLEY BRIDGE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING FIRM, **FINLEY ENGINEERING GROUP** (BEST FIRM #2 STRUCTURAL FOR 2016) IS PROUD TO WELCOME BRIDGE ARCHITECTS MAXIM NASAB, AIA, MRAIC, LEED GREEN ASSOCIATE AND MICAH DODSON, AIA NCARB, LEED GREEN ASSOCIATE, TO ITS GROWING INTERNATIONAL FIRM. THESE TWO KEY HIRES WILL EXPAND FINLEY'S BRIDGE AESTHETICS, BRIDGE INFORMATION MODELING, AND DESIGN VISUALIZATION CAPABILITIES.

Nasab has bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from Savannah College of Art and Design where he graduated with honors, was on the dean's list, and is a LEED Green Associate. Nasab studied the importance of bridge architecture in his thesis, "Connection Through Intersection: An Urbanized Bridge for Montréal, Québec " and received the coveted Student Voice Award for his research. This thesis was also published in Montréal newspapers, including *The Gazette*, the *Journal Métro*, and the American journal *Next City*. Max brings his five years' experience working in the United States, Canada, and China with various architecture firms on project types including bridges, modular housing, governmental buildings, opera houses, and museums. He has worked on dozens of bridge projects as lead bridge architect and project manager. Some key projects include the George V. Voinovich Bridge Design-Build in Cleveland Ohio and the Kosciuszko Bridge Design-Build in New York.

Nasab has published nine articles on bridge architecture topics. He currently serves on the AIA Tallahassee President's Taskforce, the Transportation Research Board Aesthetics Committee, and is an active member of the U.S. Green Building Council and the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada. Nasab will be FINLEY'S bridge architect providing bridge aesthetics, bridge information modeling, and design visualizations.

"As a bridge architect, joining the FINLEY team was an essential step in advancing my knowledge and design skills in the industry. The prospect of working directly with Craig Finley and the entire FINLEY team is wonderful opportunity for me. I enjoy the daily interactions between bridge architects and bridge engineers to deliver enhanced designs that are fully integrated functionally and visually," said Nasab.

Dodson has bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, graduated magna cum laude, and is a LEED Green Associate. He has six years' experience in bridge architecture where he has been involved in design, development, and construction administration on a wide range of bridge types such as steel girder, cast-in-place segmental, precast span-by-span, cable stayed, and extradosed bridges.

As a bridge architect, Dodson has developed and produced drawings, renderings, models, and graphics for project presentations. He has served as an internal project manager for the design of a major architectural lighting

package and has expertise in website design, 3-D printing, and virtual reality. Some key projects include Kosciuszko Bridge Design-Build in New York, the George V. Voinovich Bridge Design-Build in Cleveland, Ohio, and the U.S. 181 Harbor Bridge Replacement Project Design-Build in Corpus Christi, Texas.

He is a member of the American Institute of Architects and the American Institute of Architects Tallahassee Chapter where he currently serves on the presidential advisory committee. Dodson's title is bridge architect, providing bridge aesthetics, bridge information modeling, and design visualizations.

"I have always enjoyed the combination of creativity and mechanics. I am very fortunate to have been responsible for developing 3-D models and visualization graphics for complicated, high-profile projects. New technologies are beginning to integrate virtual reality into bridge projects which will provide better visualization of the final project and eliminate the possibilities for project errors," said Dodson.

"Bringing Max and Micah to the FINLEY team has expanded our bridge information modeling and bridge aesthetic capabilities for our projects in our United States and international markets. Every complex bridge project has aesthetic requirements and these bridges are viewed and acclaimed by the public as signature bridges. FINLEY now offers full in-house bridge aesthetics and bridge visualization capabilities. The addition of Max and Micah, along with our recent transition to SOFISTI^K and AutoCAD, now provide full BIM

HILL INTERNATIONAL, from page 3

gards to long-term key issues, especially the operational side of such complex projects, says Martin Murphy, a director at Hill's office in Madrid. In Spain, Hill has worked on many projects developed under a similar setup as those in Turkey, like long-term, 25-plus years of concession contracts with transfer of construction and availability risks from the public to the private sector.

"Our client wishes to transfer some of the lessons learned in other more mature markets with similar PPP models and requested that this knowledge transfer come from Hill's team in Spain."

Hill's foray into Turkey takes place against the backdrop of the firm's long-standing relationship with the Madrid Regional Health System, with the company being awarded a contract to provide operational monitoring services for 11 hospitals throughout the region of Madrid. There, Hill supports hospitals with a methodology for the administration and monitoring of concession contracts



under the PPP schemes, in both the construction and operational phases of a project. The experience positioned the company as a premier consultant for this type of service within the industry, and that experience comes in handy in Turkey.

The role of Hill Spain will be to focus on the identification of key issues regarding project commissioning and start up, which could generate risk either on the correct operation of the hospital, or on the delivery of services transferred to the concessionaire company. A team from Spain is expected to visit the Turkey site once a month.

"Our client wishes to transfer some of the lessons learned in other more mature markets with similar PPP models and requested that this knowledge transfer come from Hill's team in Spain," Murphy says. "What we have provided is also a layer of support and added value to the technical QA/QC function provided by Hill Turkey." ▀

ZWEIG GROUP SEMINARS

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This 2-day seminar was specifically developed to provide design and technical professionals with the skills to become more competent leaders. This course helps attendees develop and re-affirm the leadership skills, strategies, and techniques that will help them grow personally and professionally.

April 25-26 - Washington, DC
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zweiggroup.com/seminars/ for more information



SPOTLIGHT ON: Aylward

PROFILE



Conference call: Robert Aylward

President and CEO of Jones|Carter (Best Firm Multidiscipline #17 and Hot Firm #18 for 2016), a 465-person engineering firm based in Houston, Texas.

By LIISA ANDREASSEN
Correspondent



Robert Aylward, President and CEO, Jones|Carter

“The board must conduct itself as a board and not as a management committee,” Aylward says. “Day-to-day execution has to be left to the organization’s management team.”

“You have to create an environment that offers challenging work, clear career paths, meaningful rewards, and an exciting and relevant corporate culture.”

A CONVERSATION WITH ROBERT AYLWARD.

The Zweig Letter: What is your philosophy on fee/billing and accounts receivable? How do you collect fees from a difficult client?

Robert Aylward: Every business must be focused on cash management. As a technical labor selling business, it’s important that we manage our billing process such that we generate timely and project-appropriate invoices. Issuing those invoices is another step in the client communications protocol and, if done properly, should be well received and understood by the client. Collection matters are more easily managed by setting proper expectations with the client at the beginning of the project. Understanding how the project will be funded, the success criteria used by the client and the key variables that can impact scope, schedule, and fee can go a long way to creating a healthy working relationship that produces smooth collections. If by “difficult client” you mean a client that is not paying their invoice or paying very slowly, we approach those situations by first determining if we are meeting all the client’s project expectations. If problems or miscommunications have arisen, then



we must work to resolve those issues before pursuing payments. If the client is experiencing financial stress then we endeavor to work out a payment plan that is consistent with our level of effort and risk appetite.

“Every business must be focused on cash management. As a technical labor selling business, it’s important that we manage our billing process such that we generate timely and project-appropriate invoices.”

TZL: What’s the recipe for creating an effective board?

RA: There are two critical roles that the board of directors must play:

- 1) The board must reflect the views and objectives of the majority of the shareholders and must work to ensure that the company vision, mission, and performance is consistent with those of the owners.
- 2) The board must conduct itself as a board and not as a management committee. In many engineering firms, it’s common for employees to serve on the board of directors. This means that internal directors must be able to distinguish between their roles as line managers and board representative. As a board member, the director needs to focus on strategy, corporate culture, risk management, financial performance and the like. Day-to-day execution has to be left to the organization’s management team.

TZL: Is there a secret to effective ownership transition?

RA: I don’t think there’s a secret, but you definitely have to put a transition plan in place that addresses the risks, timing, and the firm’s ongoing capital needs. As with any important planning document, the concepts need to be socialized with the current ownership and procedures established to ensure that the plan is executed fairly and equitably. It’s also important to scrupulously stick to the plan that’s been established.

TZL: How do you go about winning work?

RA: Winning work is largely about identifying opportunities and overcoming objections. We believe that it’s important to be objective about our prospects for success and focus our business development activities in those areas that hold the greatest potential. This entails creating effective account plans, implementing a robust “go-no go” process, and creating meaningful and measurable milestones to assess progress. In that effort, considerable time is spent on developing relationships with clients and influencers and crafting a message that clearly conveys our unique value proposition, which if done properly, gives us a tremendous advantage before the RFQ is published.

TZL: What is the greatest problem to overcome in the proposal process?

RA: I don’t know if it’s the biggest problem, but a significant problem is ensuring that your BD team is focused on the right proposals. It is important to be disciplined in your pursuits. Everything after that is execution.

TZL: Once you have won a contract, what are the “marching orders” for your PMs?

RA: The external marching orders are to ensure that we fully understand the client’s needs and objectives and that we have the best solutions. From an internal perspective, it’s all about proactively managing scope, fee, and schedule.

TZL: How does marketing contribute to your success rate? Are you content with your marketing efforts, or do you think you should increase/decrease marketing?

RA: Marketing is very important to our firm’s success; it’s foundational to our business development model. It increases market awareness, positions us as a “top-of-mind” solution for clients and prospects and communicates the unique value proposition associated with partnering with Jones | Carter. In terms of our investment in marketing, we closely track our results against objectives for all of our campaigns and regularly adjust our tactics and investments. As such, it’s possible to be simultaneously increasing and decreasing marketing efforts across the firm, depending upon the phase of the individual marketing campaign.

“Winning work is largely about identifying opportunities and overcoming objections. We believe that it’s important to be objective about our prospects for success and focus our business development activities in those areas that hold the greatest potential.”

TZL: What has your firm done recently to upgrade its IT systems?

RA: Jones | Carter has made investments in:

- A global file sharing platform
- System-wide upgrades to servers and communications/connectivity
- Implemented a managed care program to replace our previous “break-fix” maintenance model
- Upgraded our disaster recovery capabilities
- Implemented more robust cyber security technology

See CONFERENCE CALL, page 8

ON THE MOVE

NOEL WATSON, JOHN COYNE RETIRE FROM JACOBS BOARD OF DIRECTORS; ROBERT MCNAMARA JOINS BOARD JACOBS ENGINEERING GROUP INC. ANNOUNCED THAT NOEL WATSON WILL RETIRE FROM ITS BOARD. WATSON JOINED JACOBS MORE THAN 50 YEARS AGO, BECOMING PRESIDENT IN 1987, CEO IN 1992, AND CEO AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD IN 2006. HE STEPPED DOWN AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD IN JULY 2016, WHILE REMAINING AS A DIRECTOR WHEN JACOBS' CURRENT CEO, STEVE DEMETRIOU, WAS APPOINTED CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD.

During his tenure as CEO, Watson led Jacobs through a period of tremendous growth, resulting in both revenue and operating profit increases of greater than 15 percent per year. To accomplish those results, Watson inculcated the values that are the core of Jacobs today, namely, a commitment to safety, a dedication to high quality customer relationships, a strong ethical underpinning, and a focus on accountability.

"Noel's inspirational management style and his extraordinary commitment to the company serve as a clear role model to me and all of our leaders at Jacobs," said Demetriou. "Noel deserves enormous credit for driving industry leading growth and the success of Jacobs throughout his long and distinguished tenure with the company."

"As CEO, Noel was a tough and beloved leader. As chair, he engaged actively with his board, enjoyed spirited discussions, and always focused on what was best for Jacobs," said Lead Director Linda Fayne Levinson. "On behalf of the board, we thank Noel, for his leadership and business acumen. He will be missed."

John Coyne, who has served on the Jacobs board of directors since 2008, will also retire from the board, and Robert McNamara has been appointed to the open board position.

"John has been a valuable and engaged board member for the past nine years. We will miss his counsel, insight, and experience," said Demetriou. "On behalf of the board, I want to

thank John for his contributions and wish him the best in his retirement."

Coyne, who has dedicated the majority of his career to Western Digital in various capacities around the globe, served as president and CEO from 2007 to 2013, and was also a member of Western Digital's board of directors.

McNamara brings deep industry experience and currently serves as the global risk officer and the COO of Lendlease Corporation's building, engineering, and services businesses in Australia. He previously served as the chairman and CEO of Penhall/LVI International, a privately owned building services and environmental remediation company; prior to that he was a senior group president at the Fluor Corporation.

"I am very pleased to welcome Bob to the board. His wealth of international experience along with extensive industry and customer knowledge will be extremely beneficial to Jacobs," said Demetriou. "The board is committed to continue to work in the best interest of our shareholders and Bob will be an

CONFERENCE CALL, from page 7

TZL: What's the best way to recruit and retain top talent in a tight labor market?

RA: You have to create an environment that offers challenging work, clear career paths, meaningful rewards, and an exciting and relevant corporate culture. This combination will create the "it" factor.

TZL: What's the key benefit you give to your employees? Flex schedule, incentive compensation, 401(k), etc.?

RA: I don't know that it is so much the benefits you offer as the environment you create. Clearly, you have to offer attractive compensation and benefits packages, without which your firm is at a competitive disadvantage. That said, a company with the right culture and work environment will be more successful than the firm that tries to compensate for deficiencies in those areas by paying above market.

"Marketing is very important to our firm's success; it's foundational to our business development model. It increases market awareness, positions us as a 'top-of-mind' solution for clients and prospects."

TZL: How do you raise capital?

RA: Our primary source of capital is stock sales. While we have access to certain debt instruments, I'm not aware of any time where we capitalized the firm through debt.

TZL: What's your preferred strategy for growth, M&A or organic? Give us a synopsis of how your firm effected growth in the recent past.

RA: Jones | Carter has used both M&A and organic strategies to grow the firm. Our current focus is to grow organically, but this is largely driven by the nature of the opportunities that we believe have the greatest potential. I could foresee future scenarios where the opportunities we pursue could be better effectuated via M&A, but that is not where we currently stand.

"A company with the right culture and work environment will be more successful than the firm that tries to compensate for deficiencies in those areas by paying above market."

TZL: What's the greatest challenge presented by growth?

RA: To grow means that you are changing; change is never easy to manage. The greatest challenges are:

- The ability to scale your systems, processes, and management team to support the growth
- Communications

TZL: What's your prediction for 2017 and for the next five years?

RA: I'm an optimist and I believe that things will be better in the future for firms that understand their clients, markets, and employees. The rate of change we've seen in our society over the last few decades has been incredible and every indication is that the pace of change will probably increase at an even faster rate. This will put a premium on agility, being outward facing, and having the courage to change. It's for these reasons that I believe Jones | Carter will be an innovative leader in our industry. ▀



Share and succeed

You and your team need to have a global understanding of your firm so the right people are in the right places to best serve the client.



Jamie
Claire
Kiser

M&A
INSIGHTS



This marks the first column I've contributed to *The Zweig Letter* since taking over as director of consulting. Over the course of these last couple of weeks in my new role, I've essentially solved all the challenges facing this area of our business and achieved all of our consulting growth goals. Well, not really. But, I have learned a few things since I removed my focus from leading an M&A team and started thinking about consulting across Zweig Group.

I think that a lot of these initial lessons apply to our readers as consultants in the A/E industry and wanted to share some of my initial thoughts:

- **A great consultant is an expert.** Experts know the key to credibility is recognizing when they are no longer in their particular "expert" sphere, and when someone else within the organization may be better equipped to help the client. This means everyone in the firm should be able to discuss the firm's services and specialties outside of their immediate area, and should be familiar enough with the overlap to know when to bring in additional team members.
- **Client relationships have to be larger than the**

"I have learned a few things since I removed my focus from leading an M&A team and started thinking about consulting across Zweig Group."

individual consultant. We are all busy, but we need to make time to share with our co-workers what we've learned about our clients if we want to best help them achieve their goals – and be seen by our

See JAMIE CLAIRE KISER, page 10

BUSINESS NEWS

JACOBS SELECTED FOR FIRST EVER RAIL MICROGRID PROJECT JACOBS ENGINEERING GROUP INC. HAS BEEN SELECTED BY NJ TRANSIT TO PROVIDE DESIGN AND GENERAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE NJ TRANSIT MICROGRID PROJECT.

The objective of the \$577 million NJ TRANSITGRID project is to implement a microgrid capable of providing reliable power for core critical transit infrastructure supporting rail systems operated by NJ TRANSIT and other operators of the Northeast Corridor. The microgrid will be capable of supplying highly resilient power during critical times when the regional electric grid may be compromised due to storms or other events.

Key design components of the new microgrid include a central, natural gas-fired power plant and associated substations, transmission/distribution lines to substations that electrify the tracks and operating controls for critical portions of the NJ TRANSIT and the NEC systems, as well as connections to the PJM commercial grid.

Under the terms of the contract, Jacobs is providing owner's engineering services including regulatory and economic advisory services, conceptual and preliminary design, procurement support, contract packaging for the procurement of design-build contracts, and construction assistance to support the development of the NJ TRANSITGRID project.

Jacobs Senior Vice President Buildings and Infrastructure Randy Pierce stated, "We are very pleased and excited to partner with NJ

TRANSIT in developing this unique project. NJ TRANSITGRID is set to make a tremendous difference in the lives of the commuting public during the times when they need it most when events disrupt New Jersey's critical infrastructure, isolating the local population from their jobs, families, and other important services. This project continues to advance NJ TRANSIT's leadership in resiliency and recovery."

SIEMENS AND BENTLEY SYSTEMS AGREE TO JOINTLY OFFER PLANNING AND DESIGN SOLUTIONS FOR UTILITIES SIEMENS' ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION AND BENTLEY SYSTEMS HAVE ANNOUNCED AN AGREEMENT TO JOINTLY DEVELOP SOLUTIONS TO ACCELERATE DIGITALIZATION OF PLANNING, DESIGN, AND OPERATIONS FOR POWER UTILITIES AND INDUSTRIAL POWER CUSTOMERS. BENTLEY SYSTEMS IS A GLOBAL LEADER IN SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS FOR ADVANCING THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND OPERATIONS OF INFRASTRUCTURE. THE FIRST OF THE NEW OFFERINGS WILL INTEGRATE BENTLEY SYSTEMS' UTILITY DESIGN AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS CAPABILITIES WITH SIEMENS' POWER SYSTEM SIMULATION SUITE, WITH SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS FOR POWER TRANSMISSION, POWER DISTRIBUTION, AND INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES. COMBINING THESE TWO PLATFORMS PROVIDES CUSTOMERS WITH BENTLEY'S EXPERTISE IN 3-D INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET MODELING AND GIS WITH SIEMENS' KNOWLEDGE AND RENOWNED EXPERIENCE IN ENERGY

SYSTEM PLANNING AND SIMULATION.

"The energy industry trend toward decentralization represents a significant challenge as well as a great opportunity for power producers and consumers alike, and our strategic alliance with Bentley Systems will help our customers better leverage this changing landscape through the combination of our powerful solutions," said Ralf Christian, CEO of the Siemens Energy Management Division. "Siemens and Bentley share a commitment to openness, interoperability, and the common goal of helping our customers drive the digital enterprise across their supply chains."

Bentley Systems Chief Product Officer Bhupinder Singh said, "We are excited to collaborate with Siemens to help our power utilities users advance in 'going digital.' Siemens' expertise in electrical power systems planning and simulation are the perfect complement to our GIS and infrastructure engineering solutions, and we will work together to bring new innovations and tangible business benefits to our users around the world."

Distributed energy resources, like microgrids and their off-grid on-grid mode, require more advanced planning approaches to ensure system reliability and stability. Bentley's OpenUtilities solution for utility power grid design and GIS will be integrated with Siemens' PSS Suite for power system planning to provide seamless workflows and data integration, while supporting optimal network design for both operational and economic performance.

JAMIE CLAIRE KISER, from page 9

client as a trusted partner. As we bring more members of our team into the fold, we also increase the opportunity to come up with a unique solution that we may not have thought about if we had not expanded the circle. We risk eroding the firm's brand when the relationship is purely held with one person. What if one of the parties leaves (on either side – you or your client)? How do we entrench ourselves deeply within the client organization so that the client thinks that their partner is the firm, not just the principal or PM they work with most often?

"We are all busy, but we need to make time to share with our co-workers what we've learned about our clients if we want to best help them achieve their goals – and be seen by our client as a trusted partner."

■ **Consistency is a virtue.** If the firm has no consistent approach to a project – communication, billing practices, managing the relationship, etc. – we have already limited our ability to successfully serve the client by adding a stress factor of unpredictability. What are some hallmarks of our firm that

"If the firm has no consistent approach to a project – communication, billing practices, managing the relationship, etc. – we have already limited our ability to successfully serve the client by adding a stress factor of unpredictability."

should apply to every engagement? How do we communicate these expectations to our own team members? Our clients? How do we hold ourselves accountable?

Each of these three lessons comes with significant nuance and a lot of balancing among competing priorities. Especially if you are like me, and tend to err on the "I'll just do it myself" side of the spectrum – which does not accomplish a single one of the lessons articulated above! As leaders in your firms and as consultants yourselves, I welcome any pointers and additional lessons learned from *The Zweig Letter's* readers!

No – really – email me your thoughts! ▀

JAMIE CLAIRE KISER is Zweig Group's director of consulting. Contact her at jkiser@zweiggroup.com.



Candidate trolls

They wreck the recruiting process, and a lot of them want a great offer to use as leverage for a raise where they already work.



Chris
Patton

RECRUITING NOTES

Remember how recruiters used to sneak up and wow candidates with amazing opportunities? Those fantastic jobs still exist and are easy to sell. But when recruiters fail to follow-up with candidates because firms decline for one reason or another, bad things happen. Now candidates are striking back by trolling recruiters more savagely than ever. They're the real deal in recruiting nightmare scenarios, and it's pure annoyance – an adrenaline rocket of disappointment that explodes on email contact.

Wait, say the skeptical, seasoned recruiters. Isn't this about the lack of quality candidates, recruiters failing to be direct, and choosing silent indifference when there's not a next step in the hiring process? Yes, it's that, too. And yet these trolls – in turn not responding when they're needed most – can temporarily crash the recruiting process beyond the borders of nihilism.

Troll candidates have found something they love about this tale, as it unfolds within an online world gone crazy, of firms looking to expand business sectors. The hiring and recruiting process can be deliriously fast and fun, a wonderful match of individual and team cultures set in perpetual

“When recruiters fail to follow-up with candidates because firms decline for one reason or another, bad things happen. Now candidates are striking back by trolling recruiters more savagely than ever.”

motion by cold calling and InMails. But when these cultures don't match, when candidates don't get the advertised opportunity, or when they show their true colors, there's a body count.

See CHRIS PATTON, page 11



ON THE MOVE

PETE COSTA JOINS JENSEN HUGHES AS PRESIDENT, GLOBAL OPERATIONS JENSEN HUGHES ANNOUNCED THE ADDITION OF PETE COSTA AS THE NEW PRESIDENT, GLOBAL OPERATIONS WHO WILL BE LOCATED IN THE BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, HEADQUARTERS OFFICE.

Costa has more than 25 years of operational and general management experience primarily in the safety, security, and regulatory compliance markets. Most recently, he served as VP/GM for Honeywell Building Solutions – Middle East, Russia, Turkey, Central Asia, and Africa. In this role, he led a team spanning three continents to install and maintain safety, security, and energy efficiency solutions to clients. His prior general management roles include VP/GM of HBS, Europe and North Africa as well as managing director of HBS in the U.K. Costa joined Honeywell as vice president of Critical Infrastructure Protection

for Honeywell Automation and Control Systems, leading the business development and sales pursuits of critical infrastructure opportunities around the globe.

Prior to his tenure at Honeywell, Costa was vice president of Enterprise Security and Regulatory Compliance for GE Consumer Finance Americas, where he was responsible for the safety of more than 20,000 people in 13 countries. He has also been vice president of Operations at MicroWarehouse Gov/Ed, a leader in technology sales to the government and education market, and as an engagement manager with McKinsey & Co, where he specialized in operations, technology, and strategy implementation. He began his professional career as a surface warfare officer in the U.S. Navy, working in shipboard engineering, damage control and operations.

Costa's work has been published in the

McKinsey Quarterly and excerpts from his industry seminars have been published in the *Financial Times*, *Network World*, and numerous newspapers across the Middle East.

Costa will play a vital role with leading JENSEN HUGHES' global operational goals to grow staff and increase revenue. Paul Orzeske, CEO, noted, "We are very excited to have Pete join our team as we continue to increase our staff and expand our capabilities to support our existing clients across the globe."

Costa earned his MBA from the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia, and his B.S. in industrial economics at Union College in Schenectady, New York.

Costa's leadership experience supports JENSEN HUGHES' mission of advancing the science of safety and providing unparalleled consulting services to their clients worldwide.

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THE "DRUG ADDICT" TROLL CANDIDATE. Beware! This troll is cleverly pleased by impressing everyone with an initial phone conversation. After receiving the toxic high of praise, he or she will then accept a face-to-face follow-up interview – and cancel a few hours before the meeting. When faced with this situation, recruiters try to splash water on the overdosed candidate's face. We don't want the candidate to die, a situation made worse by not showing up to the interview. But what's a recruiter to do?

The past always pulls everyone in. The candidate's history of being hired once before and developing an ideal skill set are no match for the dozens of other dream jobs he or she has been applying to on Indeed, Monster, and LinkedIn – all without a single response. And then you did respond, potentially giving the candidate a place at the table of the A/E elite. That's when the "drug addict" troll candidate returns to old habits. Recruiters will continually praise that one great conversation when sobriety dominated, but the candidate will take hit after hit of email, messaging, and voicemail praises. In the end, however, these drug addicts will just be happy with the hits. They won't follow through and they'll add you to the list of recruiters and firms they trolled before overdosing themselves out of contention.

"Troll candidates have found something they love about this tale, as it unfolds within an online world gone crazy, of firms looking to expand business sectors."

THE "JEKYLL & HYDE" TROLL CANDIDATE. As I write this, one of my colleagues is cold-calling an MEP candidate who has posted on LinkedIn that he is looking for a new position. The career opportunity matches his background perfectly, and the firm would even let him build his own team.

Suddenly, the calm and collected Dr. Jekyll candidate transforms into Mr. Hyde. "You shouldn't be calling me at my firm! I know I didn't post my personal cell or personal email address, but you should use them anyway, even if you don't know them. Also, I'm looking for a job – but I'm not – but I am!" The diatribe takes place over his work phone as he outlines a step-by-step recruiting guide that takes longer to navigate than the entire *Harry Potter* and *Game of Thrones* series combined.

"Most important of all, if candidates can't follow through on simple pre-employment appointments, then what makes you think they'll follow through once your firm hires them? Nothing, because they're trolls!"

To be fair, all my colleague said was that he was giving him a quick call to see if he had five to 10 minutes of free time after work to talk. The only positive is that we now have insight on how he will treat his team. We'll take this trolling hit and move on.

Lastly, both websites and candidates are constantly selling their services. However, modern A/E firms and recruiters need to recognize when candidates are trolling them and treating the recruiting process like a Facebook group they joined but secretly despise. If candidates are looking for an opportunity but won't listen, then the recruiting process will go nowhere. If offer letters are presented without a deadline (please sign and return the offer by April 15) they are used as leverage to secure raises where they already work. And, most important of all, if candidates can't follow through on simple pre-employment appointments, then what makes you think they'll follow through once your firm hires them? Nothing, because they're trolls! ▀

CHRIS PATTON is the team leader of executive search at Zweig Group. Contact him at cpatton@zweiggroup.com.