Client Relations
Agenda

• Marketing
• A Changing World
• Best Value Selection
• Communication
• Public Officials
• Trust
• Bottom-Line
Who does this for your company?

- Business Development Staff
- Project Engineers
- Estimators
- Project Superintendents
- Support Staff
- Project Managers

Do I get the design job or not? I don't have all freakin' day!

You're a good designer but I am starting to think you may need to brush up on your people skills.
A Changing World . . .

Not just a low-bid world any longer

• Design-Build
• Construction Manager @ Risk/CMGC
• Public Private Partnerships

Some Considerations

• Horizontal vs. Vertical Construction
• Public Owners vs. Private Owners
• Public Owners – funding constraints driving many changes
• Private Owners – largely revenue driven (commercial)
A Changing World . . .

Today’s design & construction processes are very different...
A Changing World . . .

Public Agencies

Results: New Ways of Doing Business
A Changing World . . .

Public Alternative Contracting

“Innovative Contracting”

Design-Build

+ Financing

+ Operations

+ Maintenance

Public Private Partnerships

Slowly Emerging

1980's

Mainstream

Today
A Changing World . . .

Business Evolution
A Changing World...

It’s Different

• For consultants
• For owners
  • Public
  • Private
• For contractors
A Changing World . . . (Public Procurements)

The “Old Days”

• Received plans and bidding details
• Bid the project
• Build it in accordance with the plans

Today

• Public Engagement and Expectations
• Environmental Stewardship
• Quality
• Alternative Contracting & Best Value Selection

What does this mean to us?

• People skills matter more
• Relationships are key
• Performance is a big deal!
• Skill base is changing
  • Contractors
  • Designers

We are judged in a very different way – and being judged matters
Best Value Selection

Demonstrate to the Client that You Should be Selected
Best Value Selection

Best Value Requires “Telling the Story”

- Project Level
  - Management
  - Schedule
  - Execution
  - Organization/planning
- Corporate Performance
  - Past
  - Present
  - Future
Communications

Know the Client, Know the Project

Client

• Process
• Preferences
• History of Winners & Losers
  o Why have they won or lost?
  o Minor differences can be differentiators
• People Who Matter:
  o Local
  o Central
Communications

Know the Client, Know the Project

Project

• Engage as early as possible
• Search, read, dig, talk!
• Areas for Innovation
• Details
• Community Issues
• Key Design Considerations
• Project Goals

The more you know the more you will look like you know
Communications

Contractors in a Changing World

Relationships matter in a way that they may not have before

As relationships take on more importance – so does the way we communicate
Communications

How we Communicate Matters

• People derive less than 10% of the meaning of a discussion from the words a speaker uses
• Less than 40% is based on tone of voice
• Over 50% is from the speaker’s body language
• In “marketing meetings” with Clients:
  o Listen 80%
  o Talk 20%
  o “What can I do for you?”
  o “What do you need?”
  o Not – “Here is why you should pick me”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>No!</th>
<th>Yes!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>Take Issues Personally</td>
<td>Confrontational</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listen, Logically Debate</td>
<td>Use Sensitivity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rise Above it</td>
<td>Unresponsive</td>
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<td>Have a Sense of Urgency</td>
<td>Interruptive</td>
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<td>Listen</td>
<td>Forgetful</td>
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<td>Take Notes, Follow Through</td>
<td>Inflexible</td>
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<td>Have an Open Mind</td>
<td>Inattentive</td>
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<td>Pay Attention</td>
<td>Apathetic</td>
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<td>Appreciate their Position/Issue</td>
<td>Procrastinate</td>
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<td>Be Proactive</td>
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Communications

Some Things to Consider

• You are your Company

• Your clients are very much like you – treat them that way

• It is not just a product you are providing – it is a relationship

• You must show that you honestly care about the work you are doing and who you are doing it for
Communications

Some Things to Consider

• Meet the expectations of your client - trust, confidence, respect will follow

• Tell them what they don’t know that they need to know

• It is much better to do 100 projects with one client than it is to do 1 project with 100 clients.
Who are your Public Clients?

• Transportation Agency Officials
• The General Public
• Elected Officials
• Municipal Employees
• Business Owners
• Others
Public Officials

Considerations

• Many of them are juggling many different projects and/or programs

• Yours is not the only issue they are working on

• Your #1 issue may be their #100

• Respect the rules that they have to work under
What are Their Relevant Characteristics?

- Not always the most knowledgeable on construction processes
- Charged with protecting the “Public Good”
  - Safety
  - Environmental Responsibility
  - Schedule
  - Budget
  - Community Considerations
Public Officials

What do they expect?

• Keep them up to date with anything of magnitude
• Honesty
• Integrity
• Take responsibility
• Help solve the problems – “we are in this together”
• Don’t be a “claims contractor”
• Be responsive
• Education
• It’s not all about money
Public Officials

Political Involvement

• It is reality
• Use it carefully
• Public agency people may have heartburn over it
• Don’t tell them anything you don’t want repeated
• Understand their role
Public Officials

Political Involvement

• Project credit always goes back to those that helped fund it

• If there is a political person involved in your project be sure to include the public agency as much as possible in any communications

• If it is a press event on your project site, consider your company’s image
Trust

Trust is the engine of Team Performance

Distrust is earned. Trust is given!
Traits of Trustful Teammates

• Know, honor and celebrate strengths of everyone on the team
• Talk openly about weaknesses
• Ask for forgiveness. “I was wrong” builds trust
• Express sincere enthusiasm for another’s success
• Assumes others have good intentions. Trust gives the benefit of doubt.
• Protect each others best interests.
• Examine personal responsibilities before finger pointing.
• Extend rust before its earned.
Trust

Faces of Distrust

• Tearing down people you should build up
• Viewing team members as enemies instead of allies
• Wishing failure instead of celebrating success
• Self protection and defensiveness
• Hidden agendas.
Your company’s most valuable asset is how it is known to its customers

Brian Tracy

You have to work hard to really understand the other guy’s thing

Dr. Steve Martin