

Twelve Steps To Survival

By Dan Graham

It is pretty obvious to those of us who depend on private businesses for our economic livelihood that we are in for a rough ride for the next twelve to eighteen months. Now is probably as good a time as any to ponder whether or not your team has the right stuff to get you back on the winning side of the scoreboard.

Perhaps, through no fault of yours or theirs, things have slowed down to a pace that is somewhat less hectic. In other words, the perfect time for your team to grab a quick seminar course at Northwest College of Construction that will strengthen your game for what we all know will arrive, hopefully sooner rather than later: Recovery!

With that prolog, I present a line-up of twelve, short (2 to 3 days max!) seminars, primarily targeted to those leaders on the front line (supervisors, superintendents & project managers) who collectively have the greatest effect on your bottom line. This could be just what your team needs to come out swinging when the recovery bell rings.

1. Leadership & Motivation

There is nothing like a serious recession to sort out the true leaders from the pretenders. This course may put your leadership team into the former category.

2. Oral & Written Communication

This course is for all those construction managers who didn't go into marketing for good reason—their communication skills are not their strong suit. Too bad 'cuz they still have to negotiate, persuade and occasionally confront in what you hope is a productive manner.

3. Problem Solving & Decision Making

...not that we have any problems these days, but this could come in handy right about now!

4. Contract Documents & Construction Law

It is amazing to me how often we at NWCC find out that contractors have signed contracts with us who didn't actually read them. Perhaps, this is because some managers don't really understand contracts and the laws relating to them. This strikes me as being really scary if your title is "Contractor"!

5. Planning & Scheduling

Everybody knows that this is the key to running a successful project, right?

6. Understanding & Managing Project Costs

If you are now on intimate terms with your budget and it isn't pretty, these skills could help paint a more pleasing picture.

7. Accident Prevention and Loss Control

Every accident will cost you money. Some of them will cost you your business. Need I say more?

8. Managing Projects

Understanding project delivery systems; managing information; understanding and managing risk; understanding project finance; working with project partners; good stuff!!

9. Productivity Improvement

Benchmarking productivity; quantifying lost labor productivity; managing equipment for max productivity; these skills could help you avoid the business Darwin award.

10. General & Specialty Contractor Dynamics

Do this well and you can take that love-hate relationship to more of the former and less of the latter.

11. Basic Finance for Contractors

Watch for these new, super short (2 – 4 hours each), seminars soon to be rolled out at NWCC, and not a minute too soon, no?

12. Marketing for Contractors

NWCC is also working on seminar course offering on this critical task too. Stay tuned!

The good news is that Northwest College of Construction will offer all of these courses over the next 12 to 18 months. Next up is, **Unit 7: Accident Prevention & Loss Control**, March 12 – 14. See full schedule of courses at, www.nwcoc.com .

By the time a pulse shows up in the economy, your team can be at the top of their game. Keep the faith and we will see you on the other side of the abyss.

(Dan Graham is President of Northwest College of Construction)