

From Pete's Desk

I remarked to a friend recently that this is the hardest period of time in the construction industry in my four decades. The economy is strong, so there are projects to build, and money is seemingly plentiful. But interest rates and costs have gone up in excess of rent, challenging pro formas and making projects difficult to get funded. And the real challenge is the lack of critical resources we are dealing with. We have to be aggressive in our pricing to make projects work for our clients, and we are. But we have to select subcontractors very carefully, ensuring they have the manpower and material needed and the discipline not to take on more work than they can handle. But even then our schedules and efforts are challenged. The weakest link subcontractor impacts our schedule, sometimes in small ways and sometimes more significantly. We must be constantly vigilant to deal with this as best as possible. We need to be creative in ways to make up time. And we need to fight the difficult fight each and every day in order to keep our commitments and help our clients succeed.

Core Purpose and Values

Core Purpose

- *To contribute to the success of our Clients and Associates*

Core Values

- *Great client relationships with high customer loyalty*
- *Integrity and professionalism in all we do*
- *Keeping our commitments through proactive attention to detail and execution*
- *Growth of our Associates and Business through learning, teamwork, and leadership*

Even if the quantities of the workmen are satisfactory, the quality generally isn't. This in itself slows down construction, and necessitates additional staffing, driving up general conditions and costs. But our teammates are rising to the occasion. It gives me great pride to be associated with professionals who provide extreme efforts in order to meet the needs of our clients. We are completing two large projects in Ohio right now, after completing one in Florida. We made a commitment on dates that were over two months shorter than our contract duration on one project because the client has preleased a significant portion of the building and needed to move residents in order to risk not losing them. I visited the jobsite last night at 7 PM. Our entire staff was at that job with brooms and caulk guns in hand, and with trades working two shifts in order to hit the deadlines. The project won't be as perfect as we would like at the fixture date, but it will work, and it will serve our Core Value of "Contributing to the success of our Clients and Associates". This is the way it has been on all three of the projects I mentioned. All hands on deck, out of town, on the jobsite, fighting the fight, working all kinds of hours and weekends to meet the needs of our clients, who thankfully have entrusted this difficult responsibility to us. I want to thank all of you heroes who are out there doing this without complaint. I am certainly proud to be associated with you.

As the end of the year approaches, our budgeting process for 2019 starts. The first draft of our budget is out. It will go through a few more iterations before it's finalized in early January. But it will be another good year for The Douglas Company. We have a number of projects to start in the next 60 days for good clients that we will want to work hard for.

As Thanksgiving approaches, there is so much for us to be thankful for. Wonderful clients who risk much to build projects that serve an important part of our society. Dedicated, capable associates who set great examples for all of us every day and have choices of where to work, but choose us. The financial stability all of us have created that allows us to do anything we want in this industry. Supportive families that allow us to face the challenges. And of course this great country that provides opportunities like no other in history. Thanks to everyone who helps drive our success.

Please join me in congratulating this month's Core Values winner Bruce Douglas, nominated by Bob Ritter, and Justin VanAtta for his promotion to Assistant Project Manager.

It's hoped all of you have a wonderful Thanksgiving with your family and are safe in your travels.

Notes from Orlando

As the days get shorter and the nights colder, our thoughts turn to the holidays and the coming of the New Year. In Orlando, it is also about closing out projects and starting things anew. We are in the process of wrapping up several large projects and putting the close-out “bow” around them for good. Let’s finish them, celebrate them and move forward.

And there are the preparations for the New Year. New project prospects for 2019 are abundant, especially in the 1st Quarter, and the key to a successful 2019 will be in having a strong, well aligned team and implementing sound project start up processes. PST training of office and field staff is well underway, active hiring of complementary staff is progressing, and a compilation of “lessons learned” captured to ensure operational excellence going forward. This will ensure we have the capacity and bench strength to take on 2019’s challenges. We look to be in good shape for an excellent 2019.

Happy Thanksgiving to all...

By David Reaves

Living the Core Values

I would like to nominate Bruce Douglas as our core values winner for “Great Client Relationships with High Customer Loyalty”.

Bruce and his team recently took over the VA of Rochester project, a very challenging project that has had more than its share of issues. Monthly client satisfaction survey scores from the client have been mediocre at best, and their additional comments on the survey were even more concerning.

One month after taking over the project, the client gave us a 9+ as it relates to referring The Douglas Company to a friend or colleague, and indicated that the only reason for not giving us a 10 was the short time since the change in staffing. On the question about how we were doing at limiting surprises, the score was a resounding 10 and the comment was “You have a great communicator on the project now! Bruce is very proactive.”

Now after two months on the project, the client has given us 10’s for both questions and she comments that “While the project is still challenging, there is a lot more quality communication that is keeping us in the loop and preventing surprises.”

Bruce has clearly walked the walk and demonstrated how important effective communication with our clients is in building great client relationships and loyalty.

By Bob Ritter

Our Brand Promise

I wanted to outline a short article that I ran across that was written by a communications consultant. We begin with the understanding that we have to recognize that all projects, irrespective of industry, have issues/problems that come up that need special attention. With the complexities of construction, the issue is not if or when an issue/problem will arise, but how does one communicate the situation. The communication style has a lot to do with how the situation is viewed by the other party.

- Be honest
Honesty is of course telling the truth, but more so it is about being transparent and not underestimating the severity of a situation.
- Be clear and precise in the communication
Clear communication is about sending precise and accurate information, not sending mixed messages, nor providing false hope. Effective problem solving requires everyone to be working together.
- Give time and space for a response
Giving time means starting the conversation, early before an issue becomes a crisis. Giving more time should lessen the emotional responses that can occur.
- Allow expression of emotion
Sharing your feelings and having empathy is important to the other person. Knowing that you care helps with the initial emotion of hearing about the issue/problem.
- Share your own feelings
Effectively communicating with our owners on issues and problems that arise is a major component in strengthening our relationships with them.

This represents our brand promise of peace of mind, no surprises.

By Dave Bockbrader

Associate News

Congratulations!



Tyler Stout and Lauren tied the knot on 10-6-18.

Tyler Brumbaugh and Aryn tied the knot on 10-27-18.



Please congratulate Justin VanAtta on being promoted to Assistant Project Manager!



Birthdays!



Brenda Ohlinger
December 3

Pat Nitcher
December 4

Don Diedrick
December 27

Greg Spoerl
December 30

Service Anniversaries



Happy Work Anniversary!

15 years

Naomi Sears
Pete Zimmerman

7 years

Bruce Douglas

4 years

Chris Mildon

1 year

Dylan Lewis
Andrew Nowak
Andrew Sokol



THE DOUGLAS COMPANY
LEAD. BUILD. SUCCEED.