JOINING ASPE CHAPTER 55:
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The American Society of Professional Estimators serves construction estimators by providing education, fellowship, and opportunity for professional development. Education, Ethics, Standards, Certification, Fellowship… these lead to the ultimate goal Professionalism. We think you’ll agree... If all estimators were more professional, budget and other problems of the construction industry would be greatly reduced.

If you are interested in learning more about the Chapter please contact Alan Jacobs, at (408) 244-7100 or email at Alan.jacobs@blach.com

President’s Message:
As the Holiday Season is upon us, I want to wish everyone a Happy Holidays and New Year, Hopefully we will have another great year in construction and specifically the Bay Area. This past year has been very successful for our Chapter 55, with the Joy of Bocce Event. We have collected over $12,000 for scholarships.

Now is the time to look forward to a New Year and what plans we have in store for the upcoming year. First, we will have our Joy of Bocce in June. Please keep an eye out for more details on this great event.

Our December meeting is on Monday December 10th at Stanford Hospital. Please see the newsletter and flyer for more information. Also see the newsletter for more information on upcoming meetings in January and February.
We are also looking for suggestions on interesting subjects for upcoming meetings so if you have any suggestions, please do not hesitate to let me know.

We would also like to hear from you! If you have any articles you’d like us to add to our monthly ASPE, Chapter 55 newsletter, please send it to Shawna O’Donnell at: shawna@odonnellplastering.com.

I am always available if you have any questions or feedback. Thank you,

Alan S. Jacobs CPE
President, ASPE Chapter 55

Have you registered yet for the next Annual Bocce Event to be held on June 20th 2019?? It will be another sell out!

ASPE Chapter 55 Bocce Event
The American Society of Professional Estimators, Silicon Valley Chapter #55 hosted its 12th Annual "Joy of Bocce" Fundraising Tournament at Campo di Bocce in Los Gatos, California on June 20, 2019. Again, we raised over 10K with Proceeds for this event going towards providing Construction Scholarships.

The coveted trophy went to AGC this year!

There were 16 teams and 12 sponsors represented. A HUGE “Thank you” to everyone!!

Why you need to belong to ASPE.....The American Society of Professional Estimators serves residential, commercial and civil construction estimators by providing Education, Fellowship, and the opportunity for Professional Development. The proper Education, Ethics, Standards, Certification and Fellowship lead to the ultimate goal of Professionalism. Join today and contact us with any questions you may have about membership.

Share, Collaborate, Exchange and Grow.

If you submit numbers on bid day, then you belong in ASPE.

RENEW YOUR ASPE MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Have heard? Or do you have any interesting Construction related articles to share with our ASPE members...We are always looking for great content...

Currently, ASPE has certification offered in the following categories...Click link to read more https://www.aspenational.org/.../377526/Certification-Categor...
DATE: December 10, 2018 from 3:00-5:00pm
LOCATION: 1190 Welch Road, Palo Alto, CA 94538 (Clark McCarthy Trailer)

REGISTRATION:
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/new-stanford-hospital-project-tour-tickets-52632350778

DETAILS: The New Stanford Hospital is a beautiful building (835,000 SF) with state-of-the-art technologies and no shortage of architectural features. The tour will break into two focus groups:
A. Architectural/Health Care
B. Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing Equipment and Technology

SAFETY: The following Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Is REQUIRED: Hard hat, safety glasses, safety vest, gloves, full length pants, boots. If you are in need of assistance with acquiring any safety gear, please let us know upon registering and we will follow up with a plan to accommodate.

ADA ACCESSIBILITY: Please inform us upon registering if you need specific assistance so we can arrange accommodations.
The Construction/Football Connection

By: Dustin Bass and Cynthia Paul
Source: Reprint FMI Quarterly, 2014 Issue 4

Like football, the key to winning is being proactive —take control by showing up to the game prepared to win.

Winning a football game or a construction project is a daunting task. The two accomplishments are so similar that it makes sense to look at winning a construction project through the lens of a football program.

Winning on the football field is key to the long-term success of a school’s athletic program and can be a useful vehicle for introducing prospective students and donors to all that the institution may offer. Similarly, building a project successfully is essential to both the financial health of the company and its long-term prospects in the marketplace. Winning on the football field begins long before the first game kicks off; building a successful project starts long before the project is won.

Customers think of construction projects as a continuous flow of events. Yet looking at a project from inside a contracting organization, the view is perceived differently depending on which expertise is looking at it — business development, estimating, preconstruction, operations or the field. Each function brings its own unique expertise yet the segmentation increases the chance that the end customer’s true objectives get lost in translation.

Ultimate Goal vs. Individual Success

Fans think of a football season as a series of games spanning several months. The view from within a football program can be much busier and more obscure depending upon whether you are on the team, coaching the team or supporting the team. Each member of the program adds value and has a part to play in the team’s success; each comes into the season or the construction project with a win strategy.

One difference between a construction team and a football team is the understanding of success. For a football team, the ultimate goal and individual responsibility are very clear and easily communicated. For a construction project, the end goal is clear, but the individual’s role and definition of success are difficult to articulate.

Win Strategy—Not Just a Business Development Activity

Customers select your team over its competitors based on a compelling win strategy. In addition, while some of the selection was based on a competitive price, realize that is just a necessity for playing the game today. It is not the entire focus for defining success. Giving the customer a business excuse to pick your company is the heart of a win strategy.

The win strategy answers this question from the point of view of the client: “Why should I pick you over all the other good competitors chasing the work?” Creating a best-in-class win strategy means communicating four basic things to the customer:

Why are your approach, team and company the best choice?
What do you offer that the other competitors do not?
How can you prove that difference is real?
What does that mean to me (the client) on this project?

The key is to focus on what your company does better than anyone else, rather than disparaging the competition. Win strategies start with understanding what competitors are likely to offer on this project in order to help the client make the right business decision and pick you.
**Pre-Job Planning**

Pre-job planning is an ideal time to cement the client’s confidence in the decision to pick you and your team. Including the win strategy into the pre-job discussions helps the customer see, in tangible terms, that you plan to deliver on every promise made during the project pursuit process.

Recruiting, spring practice, preseason practice and game-day preparation are where winning and executing stand shoulder to shoulder in football; the pre-job planning phase is where “winning” and “doing” stand shoulder-to-shoulder on a construction project. Too long thought of as a function of operations, the pre-job planning kick-off meeting is a perfect time to cement the win strategy that won the project in the first place.

Do a great job on this project and you have a happy client and a strong financial outcome. Even more important, you are set up to win the next great job with the same client. And to think, it all started long before the first shovelful of dirt was moved.

We often hear comments about how long pre-job planning meetings take and about their ineffectiveness. If those are the comments you hear, I would argue that you do not have a pre-job planning process – you have a pre-job planning meeting.

A pre-job planning meeting is not the most effective way of preparing your organization and project team to be successful. Imagine the college football team arriving at a stadium on a Saturday afternoon and just then beginning to discuss its opponent, game plan, personnel and so on in the hour or so before the game for the first time. That makes no more sense than mobilizing your project team and expecting it to be successful if your preplanning is done in a similar fashion. Yet that practice can be seen in many areas of the industry. Who is involved in preparing for the football season? Many more people than meet the eye. A football program will have many people involved in the pre-game planning: equipment managers, logistics, personnel, athletic trainers, media, public relations, tutors, players, coaches and a cadre of other people with important roles and responsibilities. Not everyone will play in the game, but they are all involved and are still important to the team’s success.

The same can be said for pre-job planning. It begins by developing a list of personnel who should be involved in the process. Participants’ positions and responsibilities might include, but are not limited to, estimators, business development, equipment/shop, purchasing, project executive(s), project managers, project engineers, project coordinators, superintendents and foremen, among others. One mistake commonly seen is the exclusion of the superintendent and foremen from the pre-job planning process (or development of the original win strategy for that matter). This is like preparing for a football game and not inviting the players to participate. Who would think of doing that?

**Pre-Job Planning Starts Before Winning the Project**

The release of a football schedule is the trigger for the pre-season planning process. It clearly identifies the opponents that a team will face over the course of the season and communicates that information to fans, players, coaches and teams. Pre-job planning is vital to landing the project or even in the decision to bid not to bid a particular project. Therefore, the trigger of the pre-job planning process starts when a potential project is identified. At that point, pre-job planning is focused on the go/no-go evaluation and creation of the win strategy.

This is the point in which an organization/construction team can start communicating as well as directing resources and efforts with the goals of winning a particular project and executing with precision.

**Identifying and Assigning the Project Team**

Now that the season’s schedule has been published and we know the first team on the schedule (project), the game plan continues to be developed. Remember that the pre-job planning meeting is an event like the final walk-through for a football team. Much needs to be done before the team can get to that point. One of the first things that a team does is understand its personnel and identify which players are healthy enough to play in the upcoming game, resulting in the creation of a depth chart. This typically occurs during spring and pre-season practice. On the construction team, this is akin to identifying the project team and establishing the organizational and reporting structure for the project. A strong win strategy identifies the team prior to securing the job.

**Handoff Meeting**

Another significant event that takes place early in the week leading up to a game is the deliberate dissection of game film. Coaches and players spend hours breaking down game film to gain a better understanding of their opponents in order to develop plans of attack and to transition to the practice field to prepare.

Construction professionals do the same thing through a handoff meeting from the “get-work” function to the “do-work” function. Best practice includes a handoff meeting, with the field, operations, business development and estimating as participants. Here the get-work and do
work functions need to articulate bid assumptions and client expectations/desires, and communicate how the project win strategy was developed. A review of those assumptions and the estimate, coupled with an in-depth look at the plans and specifications, prepares the team for its site visit.

Getting ready to go during the course of the week leading up to a football game, a lot of activity is taking place both on and off the field. Equipment managers are preparing equipment and consumables for the road. They need to have helmets, pads, apparel, headsets, water bottles and all sorts of other items prepared and ready to load on a truck bound for the weekend’s game. The driving professionals have a route planned, logbook up to date and equipment in working order to deliver the team, its equipment and supporting organization on time. Support staff is busy making decisions on how the team members will get to the destination, where they will stay and what they will eat. Players and coaches are busy building the game plan and practicing in anticipation of the game.

Construction organizations should be doing similar things in a proactive manner to make sure that the field has adequate information, materials, training, tools, workforce, feedback, equipment and support needed when mobilizing. Project managers should be generating preliminary plans, budgets, specifications, schedules and a contract synopsis. Superintendents should be working with the foremen to develop an accurate equipment list and to determine the proper amount of labor needed to execute the work both near term and long term. The foremen should be providing input on the labor budgets and schedule. In addition, the foremen need to generate the tool list, equipment list, site logistics plan and their short-interval plan so they are prepared for mobilization. This is the opportunity to gain buy-in from the field and to solidify expectations.

**Pre-Job Planning Meeting**

It is the day before the game and the team has arrived at the opponent’s stadium for a walk-through and team meeting. This is the first opportunity to set foot on the field to see conditions, rehearse and finalize all of the hard work that has led up to this moment. The support staff verifies that all of the equipment and necessities have arrived at the stadium. If anything is missing, there is still enough time to develop an action plan to ensure that everything is in place and in working order for game day. Coaches and players conduct their site visit and run through offensive, defensive and special team plays. Coaches put their final touches on the game plan and create the script for the first series or two. All of these moves are similar to a construction team’s short-interval plan or three-week look-ahead schedule. Upon the completion of the meeting, the team will be prepared to mobilize for the game the next day.

Construction teams view their pre-job planning meetings in a similar way. Too often construction companies view pre-job planning as an event and not a process. To be successful is not an event.

Teams do not show up at their Friday walk-through to start preparing for Saturday’s game. Why should your project teams show up at the pre-job planning meeting to start discussing site logistics, contract, subcontractors, plans, specifications and a myriad other items for the first time? The pre-job planning meeting should be a forum to confirm all of the hard work and due diligence that has taken place leading up to that point.

The pre-job planning meeting needs to involve all vital personnel to ensure that everyone leaves the meeting with a clear understanding of the plan. An action plan is to be developed and circulated to all meeting participants to clearly identify responsibility and accountability. Will everything go according to plan? No, but your team and organization will better understand the expectations and be prepared to mobilize.

**Mobilization**

Game day has arrived. Your organization has put in an immense amount of time and effort. Now it is time to execute the plan.

**Preparation Is Evident in Winning**

Like football, the key to winning is being proactive. This starts before you win the project and ends when you win the next project from that same customer. Success and winning do not happen by accident. Take control and stop showing up to the games without putting in the time to prepare. Your team and customers (and bottom line) will thank you.

About the Authors:

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