

# Workforce Development

*Rocky Plemons  
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CONSTRUCTION & FABRICATION



# The Art of Managing People



- ▶ With over 50 years of construction experience , I found the hardest part of any job is **managing the people** to produce a Safe, Quality task while providing value and doing so on time.
- ▶ Not every employee provides the same level of production, but all contribute. If a person is giving 100% effort, even if it is less productive than another employee, you can't expect more than that level of effort .
- ▶ The single most expensive cost to a Project is normally the labor to complete and commission a project. You have to **set clear and easily communicate expectations** to accomplish this goal.
- ▶ **Everyone needs to feel important in what they are doing** to provide the best support to a project . The best motivator , I have found is to make the people successful. You truly get the best performance when the labor force feels important and successful.
- ▶ I find that being a committed partner in that effort, by showing the people you are with them and supporting their decisions in execution, offering coaching and encouragement accomplishes this effectively.

# Workforce Development



- ▶ Too often we think of Work Force Development in Craft Terms , It is my opinion the Supervision and Project leadership is just as important, as the effort we provide in Craft Training.
- ▶ The natural progression thru the ranks of craft and development of skills to a select craft is important . The contribution of Apprentice programs NCCER certifications of Craft Competency, get you the basics.
- ▶ Developing the Leadership to be able to Set expectations around Safety, Quality, and Production, while Motivating the labor force to meet Project goals is the real value in work force development .
- ▶ The ability to harness that Labor tool and direct them effectively provides the greatest value in Workforce development.
- ▶ We sometimes think the best craftsmen make the best leaders, but without development in how to manage people the best don't always meet the mark on expectations


# Leadership by Persistence: Nurturing Cumulative Impact

- ▶ When we talk about **Leadership**, we are talking about the cumulative effect of your efforts over time.
  - It's the difference between going to the gym one time, and after your first workout you look in the mirror and say; "I don't see the results, so I am going to quit"; vs. working out every day for a month and when you look into the mirror you will see results.
- ▶ It's the same with Leadership, you can't just say, "I told the guy and he just doesn't get it". It takes follow up and being a committed partner to achieve true success.
- ▶ To be an effective Leader it takes consistent effort, even temperament , and unrelenting commitment to the expectations set forth.
- ▶ You can be as tough as needed, so long as you are fair, consistent, and treat all with dignity and respect.

# Field Engagement: Nurturing Success Through Personal Recognition

- ▶ The most effective manager spends enough time in the field to **show employees the work they are doing is important** and you understand their efforts of accomplishment on a daily basis.
  - I often tell my managers if you are not spending a good portion of your time daily in the field, you will never achieve exceptional results with your Team.
- ▶ Spending the time in the field also lets you accomplish one of the most rewarding aspects of the job: Seeing an effort first-hand that exceeds expectations, and being able to acknowledge it in person.
  - The opportunity to walk up to the employee and offer a hand while asking if anyone has told him he is making a difference today in his efforts on the job, and then telling him you have noticed and you appreciate his efforts.
- ▶ Honest and genuine recognition of efforts like this travel in the field faster than the next big job rumors.
  - Everyone wants to receive the same type of recognition because everyone has a driving desire to feel important and be successful.
- ▶ **One thing to remember an employee who feels appreciated will always outperform one that does not feel appreciated .**

# Active Listening: A Key to Effective People Management



- ▶ Another important aspect of managing people is the ability to listen.
- ▶ You have to develop a habit of listening to understand, instead of only listening to respond.
- ▶ If you listen to understand sometimes you pick up on uncertainty in a plan or need for guidance in how they describe a problem.
- ▶ In the same fashion people perceive that Men don't like to ask directions, employees don't always want to ask for help outright.
- ▶ When the people know you will listen to a problem and provide some guidance or options to consider they will openly seek your advice, and ultimately that means less surprises.

# Rocky's 10 Commandments

- ▶ Over my years I have developed a list of rules that I use to set expectations, hold accountability and be a committed partner to the work force.
- ▶ I spend 1 hour a week with the supervisors in training to help them understand how and when to use the various rules in there dealings with craft workers.
- ▶ Doing this live on a project provides a great opportunity to discuss the things that went well and those things that can benefit from coaching for the future.
- ▶ The following list of 10 rules that my employees call 'Rocky's 10 Commandments', are listed below. I can swear to you they will bring value to you and the labor force if practiced regularly.

# Rocky's 10 Commandments

1. As a Manager you are expected to "**work the people**, instead of just letting them work". This concept applies to Open or Closed Shop Labor, CM work or any contract that requires manpower to execute.
2. A part of working the people is to **set expectations** up front around Safety, Quality and Production. To do so, you must understand the work, materials and information available.
3. **Ask the unreasonable**, when setting expectations you need to target 30% more than what the people think is achievable. If you don't, you will very seldom hit your targets. The people will always have 10 to 20 % contingency (sand bag ) built into any time frame discussed , because they want to be successful..
4. Always get or agree to a commitment in time for every task, **commitments in time equal results**, everything else is just a conversation. Be specific in commitments, don't use morning, afternoon or next week time frames, list a specific hour (i.e.: 8am, or 2 pm or any other hour) just be specific on the time, reduce the interpretation, confusion means cash to craft.
5. Always remember, **the minimum you accept is the maximum you will achieve**. Always expect extraordinary results, don't settle for ordinary, or that is all you will ever achieve.



# Rocky's 10 Commandments

6. **There is never a right way to do the wrong thing.** You can be inventive and think out of the box, but never take a short cut to achieve results that should have been planned.
7. You have to **stay engaged** and follow up, follow up, follow up. The people must know you are engaged and checking on the work, **when you quit checking they quit working.**
8. **Trust but verify,** never take for granted a task has been completed until you have put your eyes or hands on it. Remember Rule 5, “the minimum you accept is the maximum you will achieve”, if it has your name on it make sure it meets your expectations.
9. To be successful, no matter what you are doing, you must be able to **manage your Time and your Money.** These two things go hand-in-hand, and until you can do both well, you will struggle at being effective in managing both the work and the people.
10. **You can't criticize a blank sheet of paper.** To be committed to you plans you have to write them down. Having a plan and communicating it to your people is essential for success. It also gives them confidence in their Leadership , and promotes a Team effort .

# Empowering Leadership: Making Confident Choices

- ▶ Experience says **you no longer are making mistakes; you are making the right choices**. The right choices are examples of Leadership, learned through experience.
- ▶ When craft come to you, and you don't have the answer right then, tell them **"I don't...but I know where to get the right answer..."**
- ▶ Be confident in your response, and timely in your follow-up. This builds confidence in the Leader.
- ▶ Decisions on the set up of a project have a great influence in how the project will operate. If I have a choice I prefer to have craft park on site and truck materials in from a remote laydown area.
  - This prioritizes attention to material requirements and keeps the importance on planning the work.
  - We don't always get the option but if it is available will make the job go much better in most cases.

# Closing the Loop: The Power of Effective Follow-Up

- ▶ Remember it takes 90% of your time to do the last 10% of work. **Don't underestimate the time to finish getting "done done"**.
- ▶ Remember to focus and follow-up. Its important to set the expectation that the craft must punch list their work.
  - Sometimes we hear: “It’s a waste of time and the craft miss too many items...”
    - How do we expect them to install to the drawings if they can’t review each others work?
  - I like to have the GF’s Punchlist each others work. This promotes Team efforts, and gets the most accurate reviews from the construction aspect. As a result, Engineering walks go much better using this method.
    - ▶ Don’t think you are taking a short cut by eliminating the craft punch list walkdown. It may take a few extra days at first, but at the end will save weeks in getting the work done and accurate. Starting off early with IWP packages get the Craft used to this and when System Turnovers come to bear you are in a better place.

# Strategic Timing: Balancing Early Action and Preparedness

- ▶ **The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.** Sometimes being early is not the best action.
- ▶ Don't be the one caught in the trap of the client pushing to do things too early, or out of sequence.
  - The client has people who are also waiting on the project to start and in most cases have been working on it a lot longer than you.
  - Their eagerness to start clouds their judgement to look out past more than 30 days.
- ▶ The **AWP process** helps provide the appropriate level of push back here.
  - Without 90 days of work fronts and material available, it is most likely too early to mob to site.
  - Remember the goal is not just to start the work, but to have continuous work fronts to earn progress.
- ▶ When all work fronts, material and information are available any delay to planned start is easily made up within the first 90 days of work on site. But only if you are setting good clear expectations and holding people accountable to those expectations.