

Outlook

McDONOUGH BOLYARD PECK

Achieving Quality Through Teamwork

Building Teams for Success

The role of the construction manager (CM) has changed over time. As today's owners deal with reductions in staff, dwindling budgets, and an increasingly demanding public, the CM is asked to wear many hats: the traditional construction manager, a fiscal manager, a planner, a public relations manager, an educator and a team leader.

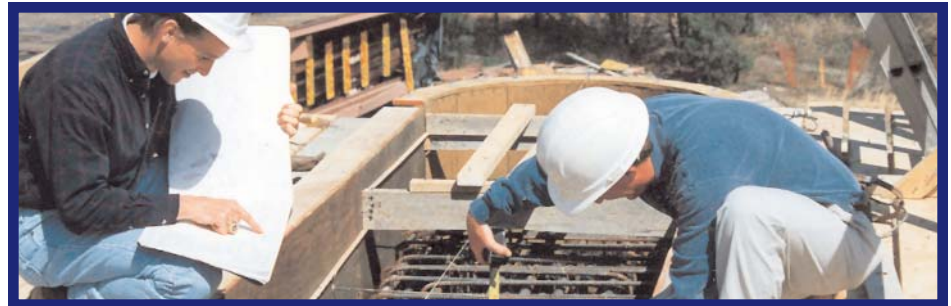
Because of this business climate, team building has become one of the essential skills required for the CM to be successful. Owners are asking their CM to do more than just complete the project on schedule and on budget. They want the entire process to be smooth and effortless so that at the end of the project every member of the team enjoys success.

So then, what is team building and why is it so important to construction management?

A team is defined as a group of people with a common goal. Under the Agency Construction Management model, the traditional construction project team is comprised of the owner, the contractor and the designer, with the CM representing the owner as its agent. The common goal of the project team is to complete the project on time and within budget. Team building is the process by which the team works to achieve that goal. The CM is charged with leading that process.

To lead, the CM must focus on the key elements of team building:

- Understand the common goal
- Identify the potential hurdles that can



affect achieving the common goal, and

- Identify how to address and resolve those hurdles

Drawing the connection to construction, the elements become:

- Understand the owner's needs and why the CM was hired
- Understand the project team and their roles
- Incorporate the team members and get them to believe in the process

Typically, the reason owners hire a CM is because they have a technical void to fill. This void may be a lack of experienced staff, a lack of staff in general, or lack of technical expertise. Regardless, the CM acts as the owners' agent, to represent them, to advise and give guidance, or to manage the entire project. As projects have become more complex, with tighter budgets and reduced construction schedules, the technical ability of the CM has become more critical to success. However, more than the technical ability and construction experience, the CM has to know and understand why the project team members were put together and what they bring to the team.

For every project delivery method the project team is put together because each member of the team provides a technical skill and ability that is required to complete the project. To begin the team building process, the CM must identify what skills and expertise each team member brings to the team. At the same time, the CM must also understand what skills and expertise the project needs.

By matching the needs of the project to the abilities of the project team, the CM establishes the process to facilitate completing the project. Several of our clients provide excellent examples of the importance to building the right team.

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Patricia O'Mahony

MBP Projects

The **North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)** has awarded MBP's Raleigh Branch a four-year contract to provide CPM Scheduling analysis and claims review services on various highway construction contracts throughout the state on an as-needed basis.

MBP was recently awarded a contract on GSA's **Professional Engineering Services (PES) Schedule** for Acquisition and Life Cycle Management (Construction Management), services. This gives authorized GSA buyers' quick access to these MBP services at reduced government rates.

Are you aware that more than just federal clients authorize the GSA schedule for use? Land grant universities can also use it. Contact James Peck at (800) 898-9088 to find out more about who is authorized to use the GSA schedule and how to order our services. You can also access more contract information through our website at www.mbpce.com.

MBP's Columbia Branch provided on-site project management and field inspection services for the \$28 million reconstruction



Patterson Elementary School, Washington, DC

project at **Patterson Elementary School** in Washington, DC. The project was divided into two phases. Phase 1 consisted of the removal of hazardous material and the demolition of the existing three-story building. Phase 2 consisted of the construction of the new school building. These services were provided under a three-year Construction Management contract with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Baltimore District.

MBP's Fairfax Branch performed an assessment of the site conditions at the planned **Jefferson at Logan Circle** project in Washington DC. MBP videotaped and photographed each adjacent building and surface feature including city streets, alleys and sidewalks. The purpose of this review was to document existing conditions prior to construction starting on site. MBP also prepared a written report summarizing the results of the site assessment and prepared an electronic photo database. ■

Speaking Out

MBP is pleased to announce the following promotions:

Mike Prezioso, PE, CCM to Senior Vice President. Mike has been a leader in the growth, development and diversification of the MBP Team. In addition to his responsibilities as Branch Manager of MBP's Williamsburg Team, Mike has consistently stepped up to participate in initiatives and leadership at the Corporate Team level.

Jim Yatzeck, PE to Senior Engineer. Over the past four years Jim has continued to expand his knowledge of construction, engineering, management and MBP's services. In addition to obtaining his PE license, his significant accomplishments include the successful completion of construction management assignments for Arlington Public Schools, and King's Fork High School in Suffolk.



Al-Nisa Aduwu, to Senior Engineer. Nisa has over eleven years of construction management experience. She has excellent relationships with our clients, and is active with The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) and is the Morgan State University's Department of Civil Engineering Advisory Board Liaison for the Civil Engineering Alumni Association.

Duncan Stewart, PE to Senior Engineer. Duncan has exhibited energy and ambition in advancing his personal and professional development, and is a leader for the MBP Team in many areas. In addition to Duncan's primary responsibilities of providing construction management and inspection services, he has worked hard to expand his skills in areas of delay analysis, claims analysis and CPM scheduling.

James T. Peck, PE, CCM to MBP Associate. James joined the MBP team in September 2000 and since then has always demonstrated a positive attitude and an energized approach to his work. He is leading the efforts to market MBP's services to federal agencies, and has successfully recruited new, highly-skilled team-members to staff federal project positions. ■

Tailor Your Services to Meet Your Client Needs

In the cover article, we focused on the importance of team building and how this is essential to the success of the construction management process in achieving the ultimate goal of completing a project on time and on budget. An important aspect of this is tailoring your services to meet the needs of your clients.

As CM consultants, we offer our clients both our people and our services.

We accomplish for them what they can't do themselves. And, many times what our clients *think* they need is not what they ultimately *do* need.

We've recognized that to be able to truly help and serve our clients, we need to adapt and tailor our services to match their needs. The key is to talk to, and listen to, your clients. Listening to what problems or limitations our clients have with their construction projects and programs allows us to identify how we can best fit our services to meet their needs, or in some cases, enables us to explore the opportunity to create and develop a new service.

For example, we have had clients that needed CPM scheduling help, but because of budget constraints were not able to contract for those services. However, after talking to them, we determined that their budgets would allow for specialized training of their staff. We then developed and customized a course that provided their project managers with the scheduling skill set they needed to work through their project requirements. By modifying one of our core services, we were able to satisfy our clients' shortfall and established ourselves as an integral part of their team.

Another example is Commissioning.

We surveyed our facility clients regarding what issues they had with their projects, and most indicated that the activation of their buildings was a "major headache". They either didn't have the time or the staff to dedicate to commissioning, or they only focused on commissioning at the end of the job, instead of having addressed it from the beginning. From these discussions, we have developed commissioning services to meet our clients' needs which have become a core service for MBP.

Sometimes it's just the flexibility that our clients appreciate. Our clients come to us for one service and are able to get other CM services that fit their individual needs. Because we offer a full range of CM services, we can customize our services to the specific client.

Essentially, we provide an integrated, "one stop shop" for our clients. What this means for our clients is that they may hire us for one service, but still get the value-added benefit of all of our other services. For example, they can hire us initially as a claims expert, and ultimately get a CPM scheduler; or they can hire us to perform cost estimating, but in the process we provide a constructibility review.

By tailoring our services, we focus on the entire process rather than just delivering the end product. Our clients appreciate the flexibility. They know that they don't have to feel restricted. This is because our goal is to serve our clients' needs, not to sell them services that they don't really need. ■

Pedro Capestany is an Associate with the firm and is also the Branch Manager of the Columbia Office

Building Teams for Success

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Today's construction clients often manage very large, diverse, multimillion dollar construction programs. They frequently have multiple owners and end-users for their projects. The CM's success depends on the ability to provide a team that knows and understands the complex aspects of the project, but can also navigate through multiple owners and agencies with different agendas for each aspect of the project. By establishing early lines of communications and assigning responsibility for the projects, the CM can institute a successful management process.

Next the CM has to work to get everyone to believe in the process in order to achieve the goal - building the project. This is where the CM's team building skills are most important. To get the team members to believe and be part of the process, the CM needs to establish and cultivate the



relationships between the team members. The key is to change the behaviors and attitudes from thinking individually to thinking collectively as a team. In the past, the traditional triangle of owner-contractor-designer was thought to be adversarial, with everyone just looking out for their bottom line. Unfortunately, the adversarial relationship generally lead to claims or disputes that, in the end, caused everyone to

lose. With team building the focus is on the project and the individuals. Once this has been established, it becomes easy to communicate and to discuss and resolve any issue that may come up during construction. This also reduces the potential for claims. Cultivating the relationships of the team members becomes a daily project task for the CM. Working as a team, each member gains and loses throughout the duration of the project. The atmosphere goes from confrontational and adversarial to one of cooperation.

By effectively building and establishing the team, everyone benefits. Common goals are achieved and the process is smooth. Issues are resolved without confrontation and costly disputes are avoided. As the role of the CM has continued to evolve, it's easy to understand how important team building skills are to the construction management process. ■

Patricia O'Mahony



Patricia joined the MBP team in July 2002 as a Lead Engineer in the Columbia, Maryland Branch after completing a master's degree in project management from George Washington University in Washington, DC. Prior to moving to DC in 2000, she lived in Los Angeles, California for 10 years, working in construction management and construction litigation.

At MBP she was immediately assigned to assist the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Central Washington Area Office to support the District of Columbia Public School Construction Program. Initially Patricia was assigned as Office Engineer working on

several renovation projects. Because of staff shortages with the Corps, she was reassigned as a Project Engineer at Noyes Elementary School, a \$14 million new construction and historic renovation project. Recently Patricia was assigned to the Capital Area Office as the Contract Administrator for the \$65 million Defense Threat Reduction Agency Headquarters Project.

Patricia resides in Alexandria, Virginia. She enjoys taking advantage of DC's museums and cultural programs, as well as spending time biking and being outdoors. She was also recently engaged, with a wedding planned before the end of the year. ■

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