

B u i l d i n g S o l u t i o n s

How does an independent manager deliver value on a building project?

Protection—construction projects are risky; you need an advocate to protect your interests, safeguard your budget and schedule, and avoid liabilities falling to you that belong to others; architects and contractors have their own business interests that conflict with the school's; an independent project leader has a unique business relationship with the client--his only incentive is to see that your goals are met, and his business interests are entirely aligned with yours.

Development Process Knowledge—selecting a contractor before your project is defined is like writing a check for a new car before you've decided what you want to buy; yet, everyone agrees that cost knowledge and construction input during design is essential. Your project leader should bring the experience and skill sets so you can design a practical and buildable project that meets your budget, before a contractor is on board. At the right time, under terms that are favorable to you, your project leader can help select a contractor, and he will continue to sit at the table with you as your advocate. He will know how to get maximum value in your project and will direct and motivate the rest of the team to achieve that result.

Perform Owner's Duties—even after hiring an architect and contractor, an amazing number of documents and pieces of the project are often assigned to the Owner, sometimes without him knowing it ! Examples: site survey, soils tests, zoning arrangements (for temporary buildings as well as permanent), security and fire alarm, telephones, technology, signs, FFE, intercom and mass notification, utility contracts, financing documentation, utility connections and transformers, and so on. These are a surprise to some clients, wreaking havoc with budgets, schedules, and staff time. Your project leader will prevent the surprises and counsel you on assigning these to your project team and finding the right way to handle each.

Leadership—every team has a captain, but not every captain is a *leader*. Your project can be successful if your Leader is a *leader*, if he or she has leadership qualities and is an active and vocal participant. He will maintain balance and healthy dialogue between the design and construction parties, ensure communication and mediate tough issues. The team will respect a strong leader, who is fair and accountable, and who will dedicate time to the project that is needed and when it is needed. As your spokesperson, the best leader is one whose judgment is based on experience in the field and a deep understanding of your goals.

Imagine a project where these needs are unmet! The value of the Project Leader is to avoid the high cost of failure and to save you money in construction that far exceeds his fee. His experience and knowledge will save you staff time in executing the project, and deliver a better building,, that operates more efficiently through its entire life..