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Focus on Project Interviews

Get Better Results from Your Project Interviews

By Hilari Weinstein

The economy is certainly affecting the A/E/C industry. There are fewer projects to pursue and more companies going after them. With each project worth significant money to an organization, your team's ability to effectively present is critical.



Hilari Weinstein

Designers and general contractors require skills and tools to do their job effectively. Yet, all too often, interview teams are sent to represent their firm with a just PowerPoint and a stomach full of nerves. Many project managers, estimators and superintendents haven't been given the tools or skills to effectively manage this job requirement with the confidence and authority they handle the rest of their work.

Presenting is a skill. And the good news is that this is a skill that can be developed. Improving the effectiveness of your presenters and your presentations will pay off hugely, especially in this market.

There are many things you can do today that can improve your short-list to win ratio. Here are a few tips to make your interview presentations more effective:

1. Make it easy for the panel to give you points. The panel can't give you points for questions they don't know you answered. And if they are taking notes, they miss something. So help them out.

- Identify which question you are answering and restate it before providing your response. Example: In question one you asked us to introduce our firm, the team we have.

- If you are using boards or PowerPoint, identify which question that slide or board is in response to.

2. Remember it's not about you: What's in it for the owner? The panel doesn't want to know why you are so great. They want to know what you can do for them. Help each owner understand how your firm and your experience will be uniquely valuable to them on this project.

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Construction Employers' Association Recognizes Safety Excellence

The Construction Employers' Association honors member firms who have demonstrated a strong commitment to workplace safety. The Association hosted a special luncheon on Feb. 12, 2009 at Scott's Seafood Restaurant in Walnut Creek to recognize these safety-conscious firms.

Safety award applications were evaluated on several criteria, including a total incident rate 25% below the industry average, a lost workday incident rate 25% below the industry average, an experience modification rate below 1.0, a flat or negative experience modification trend over the past four years and demonstration of an active safety training program.

Recipients of the 2008 CEA Excellence in Safety Award are:

Acme Construction Co., Inc. of Modesto; Alten Construction, Inc. of Richmond; BBI Construction of Oakland; BNB NorCal of San Mateo; C. Overaa & Co. of Richmond; C.W. Roen Construction Company of Danville; Cahill Contractors, Inc. of San Francisco; Clark Construction Group - California, LP of Oakland; Clark Pacific of West Sacramento; Devcon Construction, Inc. of Milpitas; Dolan Concrete Construction of San Jose; Dome Construction Corp. of San Francisco; DPR Construction, Inc. of Redwood City; Gonsalves & Stronck Construction Co., Inc. of San Carlos; Hallmark Construction, Inc. of Santa Clara; Hathaway Dinwiddie Construction Co. of San Francisco; Herrero Contractors, Inc. of San Francisco; Hunt Construction Group, Inc. of Phoenix, AZ; James E. Roberts-Obayashi Corp. of Danville; James R. Griffin, Inc. of Fremont; Lathrop Construction Associates, Inc. of



CEA President's Safety Award recipients are, from left: Mike Popp of XL Construction Corp.; Tony Williamson of Swinerton Builders; Bill Berham of DPR Construction, Inc.; Corey Ward of Clark Construction Group - California, LP; Dale Jackson of C. Overaa & Co.; Dave Bagley of Hallmark Construction, Inc.; Paul Culler of McCarthy Building Companies, Inc.; Add Kennon of S.J. Amoroso Construction Co., Inc.; Tony Mirenda of TBI Construction & Construction Management; and not pictured, Performance Mechanical, Inc.



Jim Girk of Nibbi Bros. Associates, Inc., is the recipient of CEA Leadership in Safety Award.



Dave Bagley (left) of Hallmark Construction, Inc. accepts the 2008 Most Improved Safety Program Award from Charlie Kuffner (right), CEA President.

Benicia; McCarthy Building Cos., Inc. of San Francisco; McClone Construction Co. of Shingle Springs; Meade Construction Group, Inc. of San Jose; Nibbi Bros. Associates, Inc. of San Francisco; Oliver & Company, Inc. of Richmond; Performance Mechanical, Inc. of Pittsburg; Plant Construction Co., L.P. of San Francisco; Roebelen Contracting, Inc. of El Dorado Hills; Rudolph and Sletten, Inc. of Redwood City; SC Builders, Inc. of Sunnyvale; S.J. Amoroso Construction Co., Inc. of Redwood Shores; Skanska USA Build-

ing, Inc. of Oakland; Swinerton Builders of San Francisco; TBI Construction & Construction Management of San Jose; Vance Brown, Inc. of Palo Alto; Webcor Builders of San Mateo; Wentz Group of Redwood Shores; XL Construction Corp. of Milpitas

"CEA strives to improve jobsite safety through education and training and we congratulate all 2008 CEA Safety Award recipients," says Dana Lahargoue, Director of Safety for Roebelen Contracting Inc. and Chair of the CEA Safety Program Steering

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