



THE BUSINESS BUILDER

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Spring 2020

2019 Projects of Distinction Award Winners Honored

It's February, which means it's award season for Friede & Associates. Every year, we enter our most distinctive projects in the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) of Wisconsin Projects of Distinction Awards. This year, we submitted seven projects for consideration. The award submissions are tedious to prepare and require a long list of documentation just to be eligible.

Ultimately, the most interesting and distinctive projects in Wisconsin were evaluated by 17 judges who put their architectural, engineering, and construction knowledge to work with a tough set of criteria. They award projects based on safety, craftsmanship, execution and coordination; budgeting; scheduling; difficult and unusual challenges; owner satisfaction; and overall distinctiveness.

The event recognized 54 projects as being Projects of Distinction, including all seven of ours!

"The Projects of Distinction provides a great opportunity for merit construction firms to demonstrate breadth of skills and craftsmanship, not to mention overall commitment to building safely, on time and on budget," said John Mielke, president of ABC of Wisconsin. "The level of professional performance and ability to overcome challenges are amazing."

In addition, Friede & Associates was awarded the Built On Merit Award for using more ABC member companies on a project than any other contractor submitting projects. Friede & Associates employed 32 contractor and supplier members and utilized the services of 13 associate members providing professional services. This is the eighth straight year we have won this award.

"Working with other ABC member companies is essential to our ability to complete projects on time and within budget," notes Roger Friede, President of Friede & Associates. "ABC members are in it for the long haul. They recognize the importance of safety on the jobsite, customer satisfaction and providing top-notch services because repeat business is important in this industry."



Vintage Brewing Company—Capitol East | Madison
Gold Award: Commercial General Contractor Project Under \$2 Million



White Mound Park | Hillpoint
Gold Award: Public Works/Environmental General Contractor Project



Kalahari Resort | Wisconsin Dells
Gold Award: Commercial General Contractor Project Over \$10 Million



Balanced Rock Winery | Baraboo
Gold Award: Commercial General Contractor Project Under \$2 Million



Choice Hotels Sleep Inn & Suites | Oregon
Gold Award: Commercial General Contractor Project \$2 Million to \$10 Million

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Design/Build • Construction Management

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True or False? It costs the U.S. Mint more money to make pennies and nickels than the coins are actually worth.

True or False?

- 1) Humans can't breathe and swallow at the same time.
- 2) Twinkies have an infinite shelf life.
- 3) It costs the U.S. Mint more money to make pennies and nickels than the coins are actually worth.
- 4) Adults have fewer bones than babies do.
- 5) Goldfish have three-second memories.
- 6) Humans can distinguish between more than a trillion different smells.
- 7) Lightning never strikes in the same place twice.
- 8) If you cut an earthworm in half, both halves will regrow their bodies.
- 9) If you cry in outer space, the tears will just stick to your face.
- 10) Napoleon Bonaparte was extremely short.

—*Buzzfeed*

Answers: 1) True; 2) False; 3) True; 4) True; 5) False; 6) True; 7) False; 8) False; 9) True; 10) False

Ensure Employees Feel Safe Reporting Safety Problems

You can't fix safety problems in your workplace if you don't know what they are. Unfortunately, many issues go unreported until disaster strikes. The *Occupational Health & Safety* website explores the reasons why employees may be reluctant to report the problems they see:

- **Fear of retaliation.** Some employees worry that they'll be punished for "rocking the boat"—pointing out problems that could delay work or compromise productivity. Your policies and your employee manual should spell out that no one will be punished for reporting incidents or concerns—and your behavior should back that up.
- **Fear of being a "rat."** Employees may fear being thought of as a tattletale or a suck-up to the boss. You can dispel that by urging employees as often as possible to bring problems to your notice, thanking workers publicly for being concerned for their colleagues' well-being, and keeping an eye on your team to ensure that everyone is treated with respect.
- **Lack of action.** If you don't respond promptly to reports, employees will decide there's no use bringing issues to your attention. Take action immediately to show that you take safety reports seriously.
- **Red tape.** Requiring employees to jump through hoops and fill out endless forms to report a simple problem will discourage them from bringing anything to your attention. Keep an open-door policy so employees can come to you anytime they spot something amiss.

The Secret to Success

A young office clerk received a promotion, but felt unprepared to take on the challenges of his new role. He sought the advice of Mr. Smith, a seasoned and well-respected member of the staff.

"Mr. Smith," the clerk said as he approached the veteran employee seated at his desk. "What is the one thing in your career to which you attribute your success?"

Mr. Smith thought to himself a moment and then said, "Being able to make the right decision at the right time really helped me get ahead."

This prompted more questions from the clerk. "What helped you make the right decisions?"

"Well, experience goes a long way in helping you make the right decisions," replied Mr. Smith.

"But how do you know which experiences are the right experiences that will help you make the right decisions?" the young clerk asked.

"You don't," Mr. Smith replied. "Usually, you make the wrong decisions, and then you learn."

Creative Thoughts Start in Bed

Creativity is a vital skill that can enhance your career success. You can't always summon it out of the blue, so this advice from the *Study Finds* website should help: A survey of 2,000 British residents done by Microsoft Surface found many of people's best ideas tend to occur as they're dozing off, when they first wake up in the morning, and sometimes in the middle of the night. Pay attention to your thoughts in bed, write them down when ideas and solutions come to you, and keep rolling through problems before and after you sleep. You might discover some surprising answers.

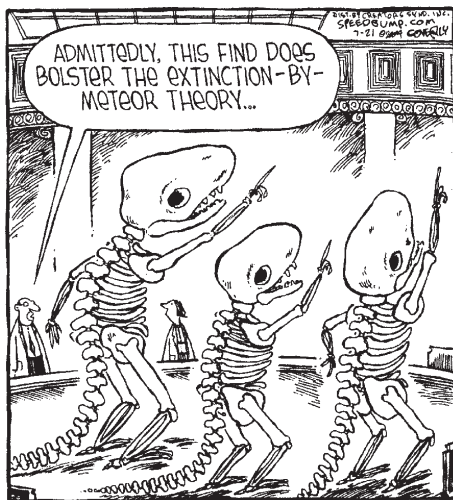
Four Steps to Building a Great Team

Teamwork doesn't come naturally to all groups. As a leader, you sometimes have to show people how to work together on a team and why it will be to their advantage. Bringing employees together during the team creation process will also help with group buy-in. Here's a four-step process to building a great team:

- **Ask the group to create a model of ideal team player behaviors.** This can start with a simple question: "Think of a time when you observed a team—or were part of a team yourself—that practiced teamwork well. What did the team members do?"
- **Select the most important behaviors.** Once you've completed your list, ask the group to narrow its responses to a half-dozen behaviors it considers essential.
- **Identify examples.** You and the group should think of powerful, easy-to-remember illustrations of the behaviors you've spotlighted. This ensures that team members know what kind of behavior is expected from them.
- **Pull it all together.** Combine your list of ideal team behaviors with your list of examples of those behaviors. Now you've got a model for team members to follow—one that your team helped to create.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



Five Ways to Turn Your Company Into a Learning Organization

Does your organization know how to learn? In a world dominated by the ability to process information, the ability to learn as an organization is crucial. Here are five ways you can create a learning organization:

1. **Encourage self-directed learning for employees.** Don't tell anyone what to learn, but give permission for people to explore what they think is important. Provide resources, too: access to information, the internet, time off, and tuition reimbursement, if possible.
2. **Promote cross-fertilization of ideas.** Bring together members of teams from different departments, and let them share ideas and strategies. Teach people to respect different opinions and points of view, so that group meetings produce thoughtful, innovative results.
3. **Use open-ended language.** In your meetings and discussions, ask questions that stimulate creative thought and learning without simply focusing on finding "correct" answers. If you can say, "Let's explore that further," you'll show everyone on your team that you consider striving for improvement more important than arriving at a single "right" answer.
4. **Treat mistakes as learning opportunities.** Hold honest, straightforward conversations when something doesn't work as anticipated. Look for lessons that might improve the process next time, as well as ideas for new processes that might result in an innovative product.
5. **Review the learning process.** On a regular basis, ask team members what's working and what isn't. With this information, get to work on fixing what doesn't work and enhancing what's going well.

Chocolate May Be the Perfect Cough Medicine

Good news if you've got a cough you can't get rid of—especially if you're a chocolate lover. The *Shape Magazine* website reports that an influential authority on respiratory medicine believes chocolate can do a great job of soothing coughs because it forms a protective coating inside your throat that shields the nerve endings that make you cough. Melted chocolate's viscosity permits a natural ingredient to defend those nerve endings and help them calm down.

The expert notes that drinking hot chocolate won't have the same cough-soothing effect because it's too diluted to have a long-lasting effect on throat nerves. You're better off sucking on a piece of chocolate and letting it melt down slowly to coat your throat.

Mammoth Traps Uncovered in Mexico

Ancient humans dug pits to trap and kill giant mammoths some 15,000 years ago, according to an article on the *Weather Channel* website. Archeologists in Mexico have unearthed two large pits and discovered hundreds of bones from the giant beasts at the bottom.

The pits were discovered during a dig at Tultepec, a town north of Mexico City. The pits are five to six feet deep and 80 feet long, and archeologists have excavated more than 800 bones from 14 individual mammoths. The haul includes eight skulls, five jaws, and hundreds of other assorted remains.

Previously, scientists believed that ancient humans chased mammoths off cliffs or led them into swamps to get stuck and die. The find is the first evidence that humans that long ago directly hunted and attacked mammoths for food, fur, and other uses.

Sharing With The Industry's Top Talent

Several years ago, we became inaugural members of the Construction Leadership Network (CLN), a diverse group of contractors and commercial construction industry providers from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Our membership enables us to exchange information, share both successes and lessons learned, and form life-long relationships with like-minded construction professionals. The CLN was formed on the principle of bringing together top construction entrepreneurs to exchange ideas and share best practices. The mission is simple: Share...Learn...Build.

Recently, Friede Executive Vice President and Partner Scott Truehl spent three days in Houston at the 2020 Construction

Leadership Network Conference. Although he attended focus groups, peer groups and panel discussions, he spent the lion's share of his time presenting to conference attendees.

Scott gave a two-hour focus group to a crowded room on improving your company's culture through communication. This topic is near-and-dear to Scott's heart, as it is part of Friede's daily routine of making Friede one of the best places to work. Scott also served on the panel discussion, "Marketing Strategy: How do firms set strategy, when do they know to pivot and what tactics have been successful?" More than 70 people attended the two-hour discussion.



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Projects of Distinction... *continued from page 1*



Oakstone Recreational | Cottage Grove
Silver Award: Pre-Engineered Metal Building Project Over \$2.5 Million



Sacred Heart Catholic Church | Reedsburg
Silver Award: Institutional General Contractor Project Under \$5 Million



President Roger Friede, left, and Executive Vice President Scott Truehl accept the Built on Merit Award, an honor Friede has received every year since its inception.

