



AFC Newsletter

OCCURRENCE

May 2003

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MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT

In early April, we had a wonderful spring conference at Arizona State University. This conference was a joint effort with the Health Care Council and the Council of Educational Facility Planners International.

Excellent speakers covered the following topics:

- . Maximizing Performance in Construction
- . Sustaining Our future
- . Business Etiquette
- . Activity Based Costing
- . Improving Speech Privacy, and
- . Construction Scheduling Games

In addition, some great tours were made of

- a) Arcosanti, an experimental village designed according to the concept of arcology (architecture & ecology) where systems work together.
- b) Taliesin West, the winter home of Frank Lloyd Wright, which is a National Historic Landmark and is rightly considered an architectural masterpiece.
- c) Biosphere, the world’s largest glasshouse is a fascinating research institution studying the effects of global warming on different natural environments.

All members who attended enjoyed the conference immensely. The organization of a conference of that caliber required a tremendous amount of work, and we are indebted to the Conference Coordinator, Julie Barrett of Pinnacle One for her extraordinary efforts.

Our Past President, Ann McGuire, led a team in developing a draft strategic plan the day before the conference. An all member teleconference is being held on June 3rd to review the plan.

We have submitted an application for the IFMA Council Achievement Award, focused mainly on the excellent new AFC web site that has been developed by Andrew Williams, our Communication Chair.

Many thanks to those members who completed the AFC survey. The responses have been very helpful in setting future strategic directions.

Frank Coppinger, AFC President

Articles in this newsletter are based on presentations from the AFC Spring Conference

Construction Scheduling Games

Presented by Tim Holcomb and Scott Tideman of PinnacleOne

The primary purpose of construction scheduling is to assist with proper planning and coordination of a project but sometimes schedules are used to help build claims against project owners. Building claims through the use of schedules is a form of gamesmanship that some contractors use but there are a number of defenses for owners to use. Some of these defenses involve changes to contract document language and therefore need to be implemented during the design phase, while others are pragmatic and can be implemented on a daily basis, by a knowledgeable construction management team.

Some contractors try to avoid giving the owner a schedule at all, in particular if a specific well-defined schedule requirement is not included in the contract. This leaves the owner with no way to check the performance of the contractor. Additionally, contractors sometimes take the opportunity to construct schedules after the fact in order to support additional cost claims. An important defense is to have detailed scheduling specifications in the contract documents, which clearly reflect the degree of control the owner wants to exercise over the project. One way to provide an incentive for a contractor to provide a schedule is to link it to specific mobilization payments at the start of the project.

Contractors may include inadequately short review times for submittals in their schedules. If the owner does not challenge the review time in the schedule, then the stage is set for future delay claims. To avoid this game, owners should specify minimum review times in the contract documents. This type of specification requirement helps provide for proper planning by both the contractor and the owner but the owner and its consultants need to adhere to their

timeframes. It should also be made clear that re-submittals start a new clock and are not part of a single review period for an initial submittal and subsequent re-submittals. By doing so, the owner encourages the contractor to prepare thorough and well developed submittals and save time in the process.

At times, contractors fail to show procurement, fabrication and delivery activities in schedules, leading to delays, which are claimed to be out of the control of the contractor. A defense against this tactic is to require that fabrication, delivery and installation of defined contractor supplied equipment be separate activities on the project schedule. Alternatively, the owner could require that the contractor submit a separate schedule of order and delivery dates for identified equipment.

Change orders can provide ample opportunity for contractor delay claims as well. Failure to include change order work on the schedule and to include it in a manner that has maximum impact on the schedule are two methods used. Requiring that change or time extension requests include a time impact analysis can provide owners information with which to make informed decisions about time and cost issues.

There are many other schedule games that contractors may use. The best way to defeat them is to focus on getting the contractor to use the schedule process for its original intended purpose, for prudent planning and coordination of all activities needed to complete the work.

Business Etiquette: Conducting Business with Charm and Savvy

Presented by Julie Barrett of PinnacleOne

Everyone needs to know how to conduct business and themselves in a wide variety of situations. Anyone who deals with people, no matter their job or their industry, can become more effective by sharpening their business etiquette skills.

The foundation for conducting business with charm and savvy is to make the person with whom you are dealing feel as though they are the most important person in the world. You show your respect and caring through a variety of means. One of the best techniques is to give the person you are dealing with your undivided attention. This not only shows respect but also helps you be better prepared to respond to the business at hand. Additionally, using good manners, following social norms or protocols, respecting the customs of different cultures and using appropriate behavior round out the requirements for proper etiquette.

Introductions are very important, since they can make a lasting first impression. An appropriately firm handshake, good eye contact and following social norms in introducing others are important ways to start.

Dressing appropriately to the situation and the people you are working with is important. Think about when to dress casually and when to be more formal-each situation has its own requirements. Be careful how casual you dress, since you never know when you will need to attend to business that requires a more formal look. Dress should be generally middle-of-the-road and not overly flashy. You do not want to divert attention from your business tasks.

Communicating in writing is important because it conveys an impression of you and your employer. Pay proper attention to grammar, punctuation and that your writing is clear. Use simple typefaces and do not introduce too many changes in a single document. Be relatively formal, since putting something in writing conveys an inherent sense of formality. Take sufficient care when communicating via e-mail. It can be somewhat less formal but you should still observe the rules of grammar and effective writing.

When placing a telephone call, you have the opportunity to make a good impression as well. To start, identify yourself and provide a brief idea of why you are calling. Check to see if the person

you called has time to talk, giving them an idea of how long it will take. Try not to put someone on hold but if you need to ask for permission.

Cell phones have introduced a whole new set of opportunities to alienate people with whom you deal. You need to exercise care in deciding when to answer a call. Think about how you are affecting others around you, when you speak on the phone.

An essential ingredient to business etiquette is effective time management. You can not take the time to be attentive to the people with whom you do business, if you are always rushed and in a hurry. You need to set realistic deadlines and pay close attention to your calendar. Most important of all under promise and over deliver on work commitments.

It is important to keep business etiquette in mind in your everyday dealings. Not everything you do will be right, so you need to remember to watch and learn from your mistakes.

New Officers Elected

AFC's newly elected officers will take office Effective July 1-

Susan Hobbes	President
Bill O'Neil	Vice President
Doug Rollman	Secretary
Jorge Abud	Treasurer

Rounding out the Executive Board are:

Frank Coppinger	Immediate Past President
Julie Barrett	Membership Secretary
Andrew Williams	Communication Chair

Academic Facilities Council Officers

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