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Getting Jobs Done: *People, Information, and Supplies*



There are **three** components needed to be effective at building and scheduling concrete construction projects: **People, information, and supplies.** [*Continue >*](#)





People

It's a cliché we've all heard- you are only as good as your people. The reason this cliché has been around so long is because it is true. Behind every long-lasting, successful concrete construction company is a crew of loyal, well treated people.

Being effective at job scheduling ties back directly to the relationship that you have with your crew(s). This is one of the constant battles concrete contractors mention is the problem they have getting and keeping good crew members. Contractors are always being stolen from; having employees quit without notice; employees are calling in sick too often; etc. These are all very real problems, of course.

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But oftentimes what looks on the surface like one thing (bad employees), ends up being something else entirely (the contractor isn't providing a very good place to work- lousy pay, no security, sent home with no pay because jobs are not ready, an excess of days off, etc.).

To get the A team on your side you need to provide better than market wages (ouch!); you need to provide employees with feedback on a regular basis, such as reviews. They can't just be hired and forgotten about, they need to see they are part of a company that is going places; they want to be part of the best company in town.





Revolving doors usually happen because there's no great reason for the employee to stay, which in itself attracts the wrong type of employee.

Build an A team and watch how they get 30%-100% more production than the concrete contractor working across the street. With an A Team you can push to get more and it isn't like pushing uphill. An A team likes to break records and do great things.

It's counterintuitive— we tend to think if we pay more and do more for people, how can we afford it? The real issue is that you can not afford not to do it.

On the surface it may look like paying a dollar or two premium per hour is a lot of money. A \$2 per hour premium comes to \$336 per month. If you run ten guys that is \$3,360 per month more. If you run 100 guys that is \$33,600 per month more in labor.

But if you have a crew of ten people (for example) that are motivated and are performing, you will get the \$3,360 per month back in spades. As your reputation builds up over the years, as you're able to do different types of jobs and you have people that are literally on *your* team, it's going to give you so much more capacity and ability that you can make the labor premium back four, five, ten, or twenty times over.

A team pays you back a special bonus. There will be situations, no matter how much planning there is, when the crew is on the site working and it's not ideal conditions to do what you're there to do. An A team is immediately redirecting themselves so they can still get productive work done on the site. Non A teams, since they are composed of people who don't know better and don't care, just stand around (probably talking about you) and you're losing total productivity.





To get more from people you have to give more. Build an A team culture. Don't build a "revolving door" culture where people just call in sick or pull no shows, quit, disappear without a word- and it's no big deal. Revolving doors usually happen because there's no great reason for the employee to stay, which in itself attracts the wrong type of employee.

To get more from people you have to give more.

Information

There are areas of preparation in the office prior to ever getting to the job that are going to contribute towards your job scheduling being phenomenal.

High Grade Form, Inc. has a job information sheet that recaps all of the requirements from the specifications and the plans, plus all of the conversations and "little details" we've discussed with the customer.

The job information sheet also has a material breakdown for each portion of the job for the job foreman. Our foreman arrives on the job with this information and our schedule goes better because he doesn't have to try to figure all of these things out from scratch.

Before each project starts, have a conscientious way to transfer all the information to the field (like the job information sheet). This is going to save valuable time since your foreman won't have to be scratching his head, making phone calls trying to sift through conflicting scopes of work, specifications, and planning documents while your crew is moseying along being ineffective.





Another thing High Grade Form, Inc. does is to take the plans and make lumber cards that have all the lumber laid out for each house plan type. The truck drivers use the not perfect, but the houses come very close to fitting together like a jigsaw puzzle for the carpenters. This makes things go faster.

Before each project starts, have a conscientious way to transfer all the information to the field (like the job information sheet).

Build as much information as possible in the office ahead of time so it isn't the foreman on the job sitting there pulling his hair out – oftentimes in cold, windy, drizzling conditions. This will make your schedule go quicker.

Materials

Many contractors shrug when asked about their scheduling in relationship to materials. But a very important aspect of scheduling is that your crew always shows up to the job on time, *and with all the materials and supplies they need* in hand (on their truck) or on site ready to be used.

Too often there are horror stories where crews show up and someone has to leave the job to go to the hardware store and pick something up so that the work can continue. This does three things: One, you really look like an amateur in eyes of the customer; secondly, as far as your schedule goes, it slows you down in a big way; thirdly, your crew knows that not having the materials needed to work is lame- if they see slovenliness in this area, then *they're probably seeing it in a lot of different areas* and even your own employees are not forming the right type of opinion about your company. A teams don't like to sit on the back of the truck waiting for supplies to show up so they can work.





So make it a habit through good planning to have a material list sheet for what you need on each job. Have those supplies and materials on the job and ready to be put to use when the crew arrives.

You'll find that when you get to a point in your concrete business that you are sending high performing, A team crews to the job, and these crews are armed with the proper information to build the job, and the proper supplies and materials— it will surprise even yourself how much can get done. Your productivity will skyrocket.

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SUMMIT DATE

This document reached the summit (was created) on January 13, 2005 and is based on the best information available to the Sherpa at that time. To check for updates please click here <http://www.ConcreteSherpa.com/gettingjobsdone>.

NAVIGATION & USER TIPS

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ABOUT THE CONCRETE SHERPA

The Concrete Sherpa is a team of people that represent the experience, teaching and learning of our team members and other industry leaders *on a mission to make life better for the concrete contractor*. We are an idea center striving to deliver thought provoking ideas based on “Concrete Advice for Business and Life” to stimulate you to reach new heights. As a user, you should remember to consider all information you receive, here at the Concrete Sherpa or elsewhere, not as a *cast in concrete* recommendation, but rather as an idea for you to consider and ponder.





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THE JOURNEY LEADING TO THE CONCRETE SHERPA PROJECT

The Concrete Sherpa Project (A [Sherpa](#) is a “guide”) was born at The Concrete Network in mid 2004. Here is how it happened:

The biggest surprise, or gift, since starting The Concrete Network in 1999 has been the concrete contractor friends from around the country we’ve made and witnessing the passion they have for what they do. These people include Dave Pettigrew, up in the San Francisco Bay Area, or the Verlennich brothers in Minnesota, or Bob Harris in Georgia, the list goes on and on. It’s quite inspiring.

We were once asked, “How are you so excited every day about concrete?” Well the answer is simple, it is impossible to not be excited about concrete when you have the job we do—interacting with hundreds of concrete contractors from every state in the country.

The thing we’ve learned about concrete contractors is that most are passionate *craftsmen*—they are often less passionate and experienced in the “office stuff”. Human nature channels us to do what we are most comfortable with; learning how to use a new saw-cutting tool is comfortable; learning and implementing a new estimating strategy, or job management tool, is not so comfortable.





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THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

So Sherpa was born to provide FREE and easy to use information on topics many contractors are not too comfortable with.

- Concrete Sherpa is here to provide help to contractors who are often 'Lone Rangers' and don't have anyone to get solid business advice from.
- Concrete Sherpa is here to provide help for contractors who have to work too hard and too many hours in their business, and one day realize they need to work *on their business, not in their business*.
- Have fun with Concrete Sherpa and go faster towards reaching success than you might have on your own.
- To skeptics who think something free can't be valuable, or there must be a trick- visit Concrete Sherpa and decide for yourself.

We hope you make great use of the Concrete Sherpa and it helps you to become an awesome success for yourself, your family, your church, and your community.

VISIT THE CONCRETE SHERPA

To visit the Concrete Sherpa click here <http://www.ConcreteSherpa.com>.

