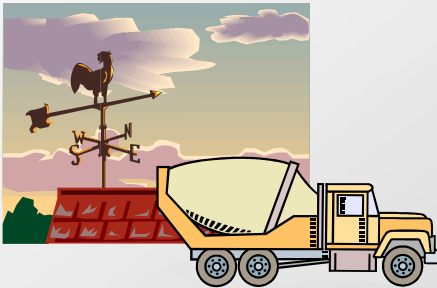




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Know Early the Job Won't Happen as Scheduled



To manage jobs properly, a concrete contractor needs to be a scheduling expert. ***The key to scheduling expertise is to know things early.*** Here is an example of how you can find things out early that will affect your scheduling and potentially save you money: *Continue >*



Two weeks before your job is going to start (the customer's superintendent has already called in and scheduled the job 3 weeks or a month prior to that), make a call to the superintendent: "Hey how is it going over there? Are you going to be ready to start? I need to pick up a precise grading plan for the job, when do you think you might have it?" Make notes based on what the superintendent says.

Oftentimes a surprising thing will happen. The superintendent will often say: "You know what, we've got a snafu with the bank and we can't get financing to get started over here, I'll call you back," or, "Move me forward three weeks in the schedule. We are not going to have building permits". Then reschedule the customer's project to the appropriate place on the calendar.

*One indelible fact about your construction business is...only **you** are responsible for yourself and your schedule.*

This information is simple but powerful. Sometimes you'll see other schedulers pulling their hair out saying to themselves: "Oh my gosh, how am I going to get to all of these jobs on Monday? " And it might be Thursday of the week before. Had they simply picked up the phone a week ago and called the customer, they would have known that two of the jobs they had scheduled on the board weren't even going to happen as scheduled. They were pulling their hair out for nothing.





A case could be made that the builder should have called and let you know the project wasn't going to happen. But here is the one indelible fact about your construction business— you are responsible for yourself and your schedule. You can use all the excuses to blame the owner or the superintendent, but it is you who is going to suffer through scheduling mishaps.

In many cases the start date given to you is nothing more than a wild guess. Some customers, in fact, give dates to you that they have no idea if they will hit the date but they want to be on your schedule so later they can tell you “You’ve known about this project for 3 months- we really need to get moving.” They say this even though they’ve backed you off for four consecutive months and nothing they ever say regarding the schedule comes true.

Had they simply picked up the phone a week ago and called, they would have known that two of the jobs weren't even going to happen as scheduled.

You need to worry about yourself and your schedule and not depend on the project superintendent for a variety of reasons:

- Superintendents get busy and forget to call subcontractors with important information
- Many superintendents are very inexperienced and don't know they should call you
- Some superintendents just don't care what grief they cause you
- Some superintendents are just telling you what their office tells them to tell you





Another bad result of not finding out about schedule changes as far ahead as possible is if you had a packed schedule, and there was a job on that scheduling board for two weeks out that was never going to happen. Well, there could be other customers calling in wanting that start date and you're blindly telling them you can't do that job at that time because you're too busy and it's going to be another week out. I could be turning away other work or pushing another customer farther out on the schedule based on jobs that are not even going to happen at that time

You are going to have to fool with scheduling. There are going to be scheduling conflicts, but planning and doing as much as humanly possible *ahead of time* will eliminate many of your scheduling problems.

A Bonus When You Find Out About Scheduling Changes Early

As a contractor, you only have so many good work days per year. For contractors in cold weather climates, particularly, you only have 5, 6, or 7 good months of work time per year. When you find out at the last minute that the job won't be ready and you lose that day—you just lost a certain percent of your capacity. With things like your phone bill, your rent and many of your expenses fixed, that's a day now that you weren't able to make a contribution towards paying any of that overhead, which is basically a day of total loss of profit for yourself.





When you know a week or two early (you made a phone call and found out that the job had not even a semblance of being ready) it allows you to put other jobs in its place. Now you just got some of that lost capacity back. You can slip another job up in the schedule because you found out about the change to the schedule ahead of time.

All of a sudden you're making things happen- not just watching bad things unfold. You can only make things happen when you find out about changes as soon as possible.

Take advantage of the changes in your schedule and call another project superintendent and say: "Would you mind if we came out there and got going Wednesday instead of Monday?" and most of the time they would be delighted. Or they might say: "Let me call the surveyors and see if I can get them out here so you can get started early." All of a sudden you're making things happen- not just watching bad things unfold. You can only make things happen when you find out about changes as soon as possible.





Sherpa info

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SUMMIT DATE

This document reached the summit (was created) on January 3, 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/early>.

NAVIGATION & USER TIPS

You can move around this guide by using your mouse or keyboard arrows. Left mouse button goes to the next page, right mouse button goes to previous page. Click on the right arrow (→) for the next page and the left arrow (←) to go the previous page.

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	PC	MAC
Zoom in (Larger)	[Ctrl] [+]	[⌘] [+]
Zoom out	[Ctrl] [-]	[⌘] [-]
Full screen/normal screen view	[Ctrl] [L]	[⌘] [L]

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.



Sherpa info

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.



Sherpa info

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

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