

Competition needed to protect work force

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Competition – it's the bottom line in the construction industry. We all experience competition...

- For qualified people to enter the trades
- For quality instructors to train
- For the most efficient and effective methods of design and installation
- For sources of capital to finance operations
- For cash flow and profits
- For the safest craft workers
- For supplier and subcontractor attention to detail
- For foreman and supervisory leadership
- For qualified support personnel
- For the best accounting and legal advice
- For the most informed insurance and bonding support
- For mutual respect among the crafts
- For community approval

When it comes down to it, we're only really competing for customer satisfaction. And as this list suggests, all segments of our industry must be treated as customers to ensure the greatest success.

Common sense may say the most important customer is the one who pays the bills; however, one could argue that your employees are your most important customers.

When properly recruited, trained and motivated with a good wage, benefits and career path, good employees get the job done right, time after time. This motivation will be reflected in a good attitude that enhances every relationship an organization has with every one of the above groups. Employee satisfaction leads to other satisfied customers who, in turn, give you more work and recommend you to others. It is contagious.

Retaining the best

At first glance, this may seem obvious. Yet at times our industry is faced with a situation in which the right people for the job often are either unaware of the opportunities available within our industry or find it difficult to gain access into our crafts or companies. Instead, they become the starring assets of another industry.

With the current favorable reports about Wisconsin's construction economy, neither scenario is acceptable.

Building Advantage works to grow the trades and attract the best people, but what are we as an industry doing to ensure the best people that the trades are good for them? The industry must return value to its work force and contractors in order to accomplish this competitive edge and survive to see tomorrow.

The bottom line is this: We're all competitive, and competition is good for our industry. But what are we if we're not competing to protect the lifeline of our industry --our work force?

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