



Mid-South Engineering Company

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Accepting Responsibility

By: Mark Culpepper

Have you ever noticed that there are some people who are never wrong...at least from their perspective: and then there are those people who accept responsibility and "see the big picture"? Someone with the latter attribute is much more rare, but this is the person who becomes the leader we admire and aspire to emulate. This is the person who helps a company grow and a business to develop employees of character, and products or services of value.

Over time, each of us has worked with each of the two types of individual. Those who never take responsibility for an error or problem are the same ones quick to take undue credit for desired effects. Typically, this individual will sacrifice a scapegoat to upper management for any perceived problem. Unfortunately, if responsibility were taken and honesty prevailed, then what was considered a problem may be correctible or simply a misinterpretation of how to operate. In today's high tech equipment and operations, most problems need skilled help. We need the help of others who have specific talents and who can make sense of the symptoms to diagnose the cure, or who can design a system without all the problems in the first place. Otherwise, by not taking responsibility, our organizations continue to repeat the same mistakes. On the other hand, the responsible person recognizes the need for help, and has the ability to admit an error or ask for help. Future projects and younger employees gain the knowledge of who can help them and our work becomes more productive.

How many times are ventures undertaken where having the right person, or group of people, involved would have saved us enormous amounts of time and money in the end? Responsibility begins with recognizing "what we know" and "what we don't know." Admitting our ignorance doesn't mean we are dumb, only that we need to be educated, or that someone who has the education or expertise we lack is there to bridge the gaps.

On-Site Project Coordinators

By: Don Clark

Investing in an industrial project is costly from the original napkin sketch through start up. Project managers take these projects from conception through estimating, permitting, engineering, and all the stops along the way. Once commitments are made and material begins to arrive on site, a new set of challenges arrive. These include issues related to Safety, labor, Scheduling, Engineering and numerous others.

At this point Mid-South typically offers the services of a project coordinator, (PC), to move to the site and remain until the project is complete.

This individual coordinates and monitors all on site activities to make certain that the applicable drawings and specifications are followed and that contractors fulfill their obligations. He also inspects work and only authorizes payment when contract obligations have been met.

His duties on site include but are in no way limited to the following:

• Safety issues:

- Making sure that all contractors and their crews are made aware of current safety requirements. These include:
 - Lock-out/tag-out rules
 - Personal protective equipment requirements
 - Areas where smoking is not permitted.
 - Authorized parking areas.
- Inspecting lifting slings and special equipment used on the job. *Continued on Page 2*



"The Barn" built in the 1930's to house Welsh ponies, serves as Mid-South's offices.

On-Site Project Coordinators - Continued

• Labor related issues:

- Keeping up with which contractor is on site each day, how many men he has with him, how long he works.
- Monitoring working habits and performance of contractors.
- Schedule contractor's work so they are not in each other's way.
- Schedule and coordinate plant outages for equipment installation.
- Arrange for staging of contractor's trailers, equipment and materials so as not to interfere with the construction process.
- Arrange for toilet facilities, trash containers, scrap steel containers, etc.

• Scheduling:

- Review project schedule and costs regularly and keep owner advised of any irregularities.
- Review change orders with contractors and owner as needed.

• Issues related to drawings and specifications:

- Keep current drawings and revisions in front of contractors at all times.
- Destroy out of date copies immediately.
- Take construction photographs through out the job.
- Inspect all underground installation before burial and note actual locations on site plans.
- Resolve conflicts as they arise.

• Engineering:

- Gather and pour test cylinders for concrete where applicable.
- In some cases make cad drawings or sketches to define additional work or changes in scope. These may include designing a drive tower, re-routing piping, building equipment supports, relocating underground utilities, adding a fence, repairing a roof, etc.

Because of human nature, the On-site Project Coordinators and the accountability they bring to the table are essential to achieving desirable outcomes.

At the end of the day in the real world you seldom get exactly what you **expect**. You get what you **inspect**.



2009 SFPA Conference Program

Mid-South will participate in the conference program at the SFPA Expo 2009 in New Orleans. The two day program features three categories: Biomass, Sawmill Efficiencies and Cutting Tools.

Mid-South will be represented by: Rob Bullen and Jason Garner. They will present in the Biomass portion of the conference, "Key Factors in Biomass Handling, Storage & Processing".



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