

Door Security+Safety

DHI'S PUBLICATION FOR DOOR SECURITY + SAFETY PROFESSIONALS

MARCH 2023

Attracting Talent and Developing Your Workforce

INSIDE:

- + SHUFFLING THE WORKFORCE DECK
- + CONFESSIONS OF A HEADHUNTER
- + DEI IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
- + WORKFORCE TRENDS FOR SPECIALTY CONTRACTORS
- + AN HR PERSPECTIVE ON THE SECURITY INDUSTRY

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INNOVATIONS IN DHI EDUCATION



ERIN C. WILSON, AOC, CFDAI, DHT, DHC, CDT, CCPR, is Influencer Education Manager (educating clients on the proper product selection for every opening to provide a safe and secure environment) at dormakaba USA Inc. She is Chair of the DHI Education Council.

EDUCATING DOOR SECURITY AND SAFETY PROFESSIONALS IS A FOCUS OF DHI. ALWAYS HAS BEEN. ALWAYS WILL BE.

Traditionally, that education has been delivered in a classroom setting. When I took DHI classes, I spent six days in a room from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The format of education changed nearly 20 years ago to the modular format of today. This format allows students with knowledge in a certain area to skip that class and move through the curriculum faster. Classes are still delivered in a traditional classroom setting.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced a change in the delivery of education. Many classes are now hosted online, led by a virtual instructor, allowing many more students to take classes. It has reduced costs for employees and employers as well, since there is no need to travel and be out of the office for a week.

The pandemic has brought to light not only the need for different delivery methods of education, but also the need for increased educational offerings. Many of the knowledgeable and experienced people in the industry are at or nearing retirement age.

The pandemic has changed people's lives and perspectives, leading to the Great Resignation. Many more people are retiring than expected. With that goes their knowledge and experience.

Our industry needs to attract the next generations. To do that, education and its delivery need to adapt. Millennials and Gen Z want education, but they don't want the traditional classroom setting. Gen Z are digital natives,

having only known a world full of instant technology at their fingertips, with millennials equally adept at navigating life online. Our education format has been the same for nearly 20 years—it is time for a change.

The DHI Education Council and DHI instructors are assessing our curriculum, determining what needs to be improved, what can be adapted to on-demand learning, what are the best ways to add more practical exercises and more.

One of the most common comments at the end of course evaluations is about the practical exercises, saying how they were very helpful to learning and applying the content, and students asking for more.

Quality education that is relevant and practical takes time to develop and evaluate, and DHI is in the midst of that process. Keep an eye out for a survey from DHI this spring, asking for input on course development—we want to hear from you. New and improved programs will come soon, and it will be worth the wait.

In the meantime, take advantage of the DHI Classroom Series (dhi.org/class), featuring technical education offered regionally in 2023. The Spring Classroom Series will be held April 16-20, 2023, in Minneapolis, MN; the Fall Classroom



Series will be held September 10-15, 2023, in Raleigh, NC. Learn more at dhi.org/class or scan the QR code. +

IN MEMORIAM



JAMES A. RusSEnBERGER, DAHC, FDHI

James A. Russenberger, DAHC, FDHI, who served as DHI President in 1987-88, passed away on February 4, 2023 at age 78. He started in the door and hardware industry in 1964. In 1971, he joined Martin Borchert, Lara Hutt, and Philip Pierini to form Asco Hardware. He was a leader of the industry in the South from 1971 to 2021. His obituary can be found at www.arkansasonline.com/obituaries/2023/feb/07/james-russenberger-2023-02-07/ or scan the QR code to the left.



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BE A FACE OF DHI WE'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU!

Volunteering to be a "Face" of DHI is a great way to expand your professional network. It allows *Door Security + Safety* readers to get to know you better and also gives you a chance to share your accomplishments and career highlights in our industry. Not ready to be a "Face" but know someone who is? Email Alexandra Walsh at awalsh@dhi.org with your nominee. We'll take care of the rest!

AUSTIN WATSON, EHC, DHT, CFDAI

**EAC SPECIALIST/PROJECT MANAGER, WARREN DOORS &
ACCESS CONTROL**

DHI MEMBER SINCE 2019

WHAT WERE YOUR CHILDHOOD AMBITIONS?

As a child, I wanted to be everything from a detective to an architect. But when I started playing the guitar, of course I wanted to be a musician.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?

My first job was at a call center working for RSMeans.

WHAT LED YOU TO THIS INDUSTRY?

My pastor actually got me an interview for a warehouse manager assistant position. Then the rest is history.

WHAT'S YOUR PROUDEST PROFESSIONAL MOMENT?

Getting my Electrified Hardware Consultant (EHC) certification was a huge moment for me. I didn't go the college route, so being able to achieve something like this without a degree gave me more confidence. Also, being an instructor for DHI was right there with getting my EHC.

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

Trying to not take on too much at one time.

WHAT'S YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE?

Starting a new TV show with my wife and telling her I won't watch it without her (but I still do).

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BOOK/ MOVIE?

My favorite movie is "Spider-Man: Homecoming."

WHO DO YOU CONSIDER A MENTOR OR HERO?

Kevin Tish has been a great mentor to me. He is always available to answer any questions I have. He has pushed me to do more than I thought I was capable of. Kevin is the definition of mentoring and has mentored so many people in our industry.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU EVER RECEIVED?

Put God first and family second, everything else can wait.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU NEVER RECEIVED?

It's okay to say "no." Sometimes saying no can be the best choice for both parties.

HOW HAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH DHI SUPPORTED YOUR CAREER?

Being involved with DHI has been one of the best choices I could have made for my career. The knowledge I have gained is second to none. But the best thing is the relationships I have built through DHI. You become part of a family of people located all across the world.



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ONE

SHUFFLING THE DECK: **ACHIEVING MORE**

WITHOUT ADDING STAFF

BY TAYLOR FISCHER



In a tough labor market, consider looking inside your company for hidden talent. Increased employee engagement, team trust, improved retention and more can benefit employees and the company.

It's 8:45 a.m. on a Tuesday, and that slow, heavy feeling of dread is sinking over you. You've got a meeting at 9 a.m., and you know you're about to be stuck in an hour-long discussion about the same old problems—you're short-staffed, your team is burned out, and despite everyone's best efforts, you feel stuck.

For six months (or is it seven now?) you've been trying to fill a handful of vacant positions with little success. You've had very few applicants, even fewer interviews, and the candidates you did have were either unqualified, underwhelming or way out of the available salary range. If your team doesn't get this figured out, and soon, all the customer relationships and innovative products in the world won't matter. You must address this capacity issue but have no idea where to start.

Now 8:55 a.m. approaches and you head down the hall, trying to shake off your funk and come into this meeting with fresh eyes. As you sit and wait for the meeting to commence, staring at the whiteboard with last week's leftover problems, an idea occurs to you.

"What can we do differently?" you ponder. "Surely everyone is having the same hiring issues we are, yet some seem unphased by the challenges. What are they doing that we're not?"

A few more moments of silence pass as you look around the table. Seated across from you is Michael, a tenured employee who has been with the company for 22 years. Michael has been with the company so long he's practically a legend, and suddenly you remember his origin story—Mike started in the warehouse, sweeping and driving a forklift.

In that moment it dawns on you: "What if we look at the people we already have and see if they can be leveraged more effectively? There are probably lots of Mikes just doing their job with a cache of secret skills and talents that we're not taking advantage of."

The meeting begins and your team runs through the usual agenda, and when it's time for open forum, you're prepared. "The bad news is I haven't been able to make any headway on filling the procurement position, even though I know how critical it is to our growth moving forward," you begin, wanting to be transparent about where things stand.

"However," you continue, "I have an idea to rectify that." A few heads snap in your direction, most of the team listening attentively now. "I think we should look internally to fill the position." You hear a few grumbles

around the room, and even spot an eye roll. Jessica, the Director of Sales, chimes in: "You mean like an internal promotion? There isn't anyone in that department ready to take on that responsibility. Not a chance."

A few people nod in agreement, but you brace yourself. "Not exactly" you respond. "I think we need to cast a wider net. I don't think we should just arbitrarily select someone from the department and hope it works out. Let's start by defining exactly what it would take for someone to succeed in that role, and then look at all our people and see who fits that description."

A few moments pass as everyone digests this. "Isn't that kind of backwards?" John, the Chief Financial Officer, asks. "I mean, if anyone was interested in the position internally, they would have spoken up by now."

You think for a moment and reflect on your own experience in the company. "Most people probably don't even consider positions outside of their own department. They don't want to look bad or put themselves in an area where they don't have as much experience. And they might be worried that once they get in the position, they wouldn't have the training and support they need like a new hire would."

A few murmurs of agreement flurry around the room. Finally, Nick, the Vice President of Operations, speaks up. "You guys remember that conference I went to over the summer?" A few nods. "I listened to this presentation called 'Shuffling the Deck' that explained a method like what we're talking about. I think if we're going to try this, we should approach it in a structured, deliberate way. I'll grab my notes from that speaker and see if there's anything useful there; let's revisit this next week."

The meeting moves on, and you breathe a sigh of relief that the team is open to this unorthodox approach.

As the week passes, you run through the roster of your current staff, trying to identify who might be good to fill your position, but ultimately don't land anywhere. Next Tuesday approaches, and you're slightly embarrassed to admit you haven't arrived at any solid possibilities, despite the team's receptiveness to your idea.

You shake yourself off and grab your coffee to head into the meeting. When you enter the conference room, you immediately notice that the table has a deck of cards splayed out, covering most of the tabletop. Nick isn't tucked away in his usual corner of the room. Instead, he's standing at the whiteboard, patiently waiting for everyone to arrive.

As soon as the meeting begins, he starts, "We're not going to run our typical agenda today. I was able to go back and find my notes from the conference, and I was even able to reach out to the speaker and get a copy of the presentation. Today, we're going to talk about 'Shuffling the Deck' and decide if this approach can work for us." You ignore a sigh of skepticism from your colleague to the right and affirm, "I'm glad to hear it! Tell us all about what you learned."

Nick begins, "'Shuffling the Deck' is all about evaluating an accountability structure to help identify and eliminate inefficiencies, streamlining work and saving time, money and frustrations. By embracing team member strengths, that leads to satisfied, fulfilled and happier employees who ultimately work for what's best for both themselves and the company because they're aligned.

"If we invest in core team members, that builds trust and fosters innovation. When employees feel like their strengths are not only recognized but used, they bring their unique perspectives and ideas to the table more freely."

He pauses to give everyone a moment to process this, and Jessica responds, "That all sounds great in theory, but how do we actually do that?" This is the moment Nick has been waiting for, and a giant grin spreads across his face. "That's what









the cards on the table are for." A few people laugh. "Look, we all know I love my Friday night poker, but now hardly seems the time for me to take all your pocket change!" Mike interjects in his good-natured way.

Nick isn't deterred and continues. "The cards represent our values and skills as a company. Before we even bring any names into this, the first thing we need to do is all agree on those values and identify what specific skills and traits are needed for all our open roles. That will help us evaluate our options objectively and with clarity. We're going to go through four steps in this process: placing your bet, reading the players, playing your hand and winning the game.

"The first step in this process is to place your bet. To do that, we first need to look at the cards we've been dealt. We're going to start with the face cards: jack, queen, king and ace. These cards represent our core values that we want every single employee to have, regardless of what job they're doing. They show up in every suit, and when face cards are in play, you're more likely to have a winning hand. We already have strong core values as a part of our culture, so for this part we just need to identify what is what. Jessica, can you grab a Sharpie and label each of the face cards with the core value it represents? Let's make the ace our most critical value: outstanding outcomes. What do you guys think the others should be?" (See Table 1 below for a sample illustrating this.)

The group quickly lays out the rest of their face cards, and they're ready for what comes next. Nick explains, "Our next step isn't quite as straightforward. Now we have 36 cards left, and we need to identify a different trait for each one of those 36 cards."

TABLE 1. VALUES FOR SUCCESS

 DIAMONDS attention to detail sense of urgency focus timeliness responsiveness follow-through organization accuracy efficiency 	 CLUBS flexibility adaptability creativity open-mindedness teachability motivation resilience insightfulness assertiveness 	 HEARTS helpfulness friendliness communicative supportive passionate patient thoughtful encouraging confident 	 SPADES knowledgeable skilled tech savvy driven autonomy generosity decisiveness agility dependability 
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The room looks uneasy, but Nick goes on. “Although that sounds like a huge undertaking, we do have some guidance. Each of the suits represents a category of characteristics that someone would need to succeed in a particular role. We have diamonds, which are traits of perseverance and determination; hearts, which represent traits of compassion and communication; spades, which stands for traits of experience and talent; and clubs, which encompasses traits of imagination and drive.”

The discussion starts slowly but builds momentum. After 20 minutes or so, the team has all their number cards labeled with unique traits and skills needed for an individual to succeed in various roles. (See Table 2 for questions to ask to clarify how people can fill certain roles.) You’re genuinely surprised by how engaged everyone is in this process, but privately elated that your suggestion seems to be going somewhere.

Nick flips through his notes for a moment, then goes back to the board; “Knowing what we have and what we need is great, but the next part is just as critical to placing a good bet. Mike, I bet you know what comes next—what would you say?”

Mike thinks for a moment, and then replies, “Well you’ve gotta have a feel for the other players. When you place a bet, you’re thinking about what moves everyone else is making, and deciding what hand to play based on what you think they have. I don’t think she knows I know, but every time Allison has a good hand, she frowns a little bit!”

The room laughs, and Nick answers, “Mike’s exactly right. You must know your players, intimately. You need to know how they think, how they work and be able to predict what they’re likely to do. That’s what I want everyone to do this week—go back to your teams and get to know them and come back next week and be prepared to discuss. You can go about this any way you want—a formal assessment such as the Myers-Briggs personality assessment or the Kolbe System,

“‘Shuffling the Deck’ is all about evaluating an accountability structure to help identify and eliminate inefficiencies, streamlining work and saving time, money and frustrations.”

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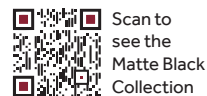
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peer reviews and performance records, or just one-on-one meetings and talk to them about their ambitions, preferences, talents and aversions.”

Jessica, forever questioning, chimes in again. “But what about us? Where do we fit into this model? Should we be evaluating ourselves too?”

Nick is prepared for this question and responds. “We’re all in this room because we’re leaders in this organization. That means we’re the dealers. We have a seat at the table, but we’re not playing the game for our own benefit. We’re empowered to make decisions that are in the best interest of the company, ethically and with integrity. That’s how casinos, and eventually our company, will be able to ensure that ‘the house always wins.’”

After a few more housekeeping items, the meeting adjourns and everyone heads back to their teams, tasked with getting to know them on a deeper level.

The following week everyone returns with newfound energy. You head to the meeting, eager to share your experience with evaluation with your team. “So what did you all discover since last week?” Nick asks. You immediately jump in: “I actually found the process of getting to know my guys really enjoyable. We did an emotional intelligence assessment and I learned that some of my project managers aren’t as strong in communications as I assumed, but it helped me see areas where I can work with them.

“I was also surprised to find out that Monica has really strong networking skills. Even though she’s never done sales, she might be a really good fit for

that outside sales position we haven’t been able to fill.”

Jessica perks up at the sound of sales and replies, “Monica? I hadn’t even considered her as an option. Now that you mention her, I actually heard that she might be applying at other companies. If she’s looking around, is she really even committed to this work?”

Nick sees his opportunity and swoops in. “Jessica brings up an excellent point, which is the next part we’ll discuss today. Now that we’ve all evaluated our team members directly, let’s talk about what we learn indirectly, also known as ‘Player Tells.’ Last week Mike mentioned his wife’s frown when she has a good hand; that’s exactly the type of thing we want to look for when we’re making these decisions.

“A tell can be many things—a sniffle, a foot tap, a goofy smirk. For our purposes, tells are things that our employees won’t say to us explicitly, but still give us insight into what’s going on with them and what’s best for the company. We can look at things like gossip, attendance and attitude, and explicit tells like bluffing. The rumor mill can clue you in to when employees are interested in a different role.

“A negative attitude can be a sign of burnout and disengagement. Frequent absence or tardiness can be an indicator of dissatisfaction or even job-seeking; you’ve even had a staff member try to bluff by leveraging an outside job offer for a raise. You also want to consider team members who

TABLE 2. SIX QUESTIONS TO CLARIFY ROLES

QUESTION 1 What are we trying to accomplish with this role?	QUESTION 2 What resources would someone need to succeed in this role?	QUESTION 3 Who knows enough about this role to train others?
QUESTION 4 Does this role overlap with another role?	QUESTION 5 Could part or all of this role be performed with a tech solution?	QUESTION 6 What’s the worst thing that could happen if no one filled this role?

TABLE 3. WHAT MAKES A GOOD HAND?

STRAIGHT Has a good mix across suits and ranks, versatile	FULL HOUSE Very strong in a few areas, great teacher
FLUSH Expert in one particular suit, wealth of knowledge	PAIR Shows potential, good foundation for stronger hand

TABLE 4. THE PRIZE POT

WELL ROUNDED EMPLOYEES	LESS TIME SPENT ON TRAINING	INCREASED EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	MINIMIZED REDUNDANCY
TEAM TRUST FOSTERED IN LEADERSHIP	IMPROVED MORALE AND RETENTION	INCREASED BENCH STRENGTH FOR FUTURE STRATEGIC MOVES	DEEPER TEAM ALIGNMENT AND AUTHENTICITY

“We have so much to gain by following this process. If we tactfully play our cards right, we just might win the game.”

may have told you to keep them in mind for future internal opportunities, as they might be feeling restless or underutilized. It sounds like that might be the situation with Monica.”

John, ever the devil’s advocate, pipes in, “Okay, now we have all this information about what we need and who we have, but we can’t just start plugging people into new jobs! How do we figure out what the right moves are? There are too many options and we don’t want to give someone a promotion just to placate them.”

The room nods in agreement, but Nick has done his research. He refers to the

presentation. “This is the part where we need to be really transparent about what we’re trying to do to find the best fit. We need to ask ourselves some tough questions before we know what moves we need to make, and then we need to try to make the best hand with what we have available.”

“Now that we have a clear understanding of the purpose of the position and what qualities someone needs to excel in that role, we can look at our existing team members to see who a good fit might be. We all know every move isn’t going to be perfect, but we can see what has a chance of working well.”

Jessica looks thoughtful for a moment and provides some unexpected input. “Now that I’m looking at it this way, I’m seeing what you’re saying about Monica being a good fit for the sales role. She has a good mix of traits across all the suits and has the potential to be extremely versatile.” (See Table 3 for examples of what makes a “good hand.”)

Nick smiles. “I couldn’t agree more! I think that’s a very strong hand, like playing a straight. But that leaves a hole in the project management department, which really needs a very different temperament. For

that position, I need to look for someone who’s a flush, an expert in one particular suit. That wealth of knowledge is critical to someone succeeding in that role.” Mike sits up excitedly and says, “Well I don’t know about a flush, but I’ve got somebody who’s a wildcard!! What about Alex? That guy can do anything.”

The discussion continues for some time, and finally turns to the inevitable—the bad apples. Nick knows exactly how to tackle this problem.

“Now, some of you might be thinking, ‘All this optimization sounds like a great idea, but what do I do with my guy who just won’t adapt to the changes?’ This can be a tough question for teams. I think we need to honestly look at whether they’re performing in their current role. If the answer is yes, it’s totally fine to leave them be. Some people are already being used in the way that’s best for them. But if the answer that immediately springs to mind is ‘this guy is a Joker!’ then you know what we must do. As painful as it is, sometimes you do have to make the decision to fold.”

A heavy silence hangs over the room, and John is the first person to speak. “I think I might have somebody like that on my team. I need to really look at them and figure out if they need to be shuffled, or if they’re out of the game.”

After a moment, Nick responds. “As challenging as it can be, ultimately these moves will be what’s best for the future of the company. We’re not making these decisions based on personality, connections or seniority. We’re looking at how we can function most efficiently with the resources we have. We have so much to gain by following this process. If we tactfully play our cards right, we just might win the game.” (See Table 4 to see the “Prize Pot” payoff from this process.) +

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CONFESSIONS OF A DOOR AND HARDWARE INDUSTRY HEADHUNTER

Find out why door security and safety professionals take new jobs.

BY BRIAN CALSYN

Most of the time when an in-demand professional changes jobs, it involves an opportunity or an increase in compensation—and that's certainly is the case in the architectural openings industry. I've recruited for manufacturers, door and hardware distributors and access control/security providers where more money is always part of the equation.



However, what many don't realize is there's often something else motivating top talent or the previously productive worker to leave. Within commercial openings, especially with distributors, I have noticed recent, distinct trends as to why door security and safety professionals can become dissatisfied and change companies.

I've been a third-party recruiter for 30 years and have specialized in working with distributors of Division 8 products for the past nine years. I recruit project managers, salespeople, branch managers, estimators, detailers and even installers, primarily for distributors. I fill 30 to 40 of these types of positions every year. I find experienced, qualified, top-producing talent that end up quitting their jobs and taking new ones—with my clients.

Why? You might think it's simply earning more money, but there's more to it than that.

More than 95% of the candidates I place are employed when I start talking with them. Most of them have worked with their company for more

than four years—others much longer. Very few of the candidates (less than 5%) that I eventually place are actively looking when I contact them. Most haven't interviewed or talked with another company in years. Many don't even have a resume.

A reasonable person might ask, "Why are these door, frame and hardware (DFH) professionals suddenly deciding to change jobs when I contact them?"

It's not my superior sales skills, I assure you.

The truthful answer is pretty simple: they're unhappy about something. It bothers them, whatever it is, but not to the point (yet) where they're willing to do anything about it. At least, that's the case when I initially contact them.

If I do my job right, the thing they're unhappy about becomes a raging problem that needs to get fixed. In many cases, the position I'm marketing, or another one I have access to, becomes the preferred solution.

"In this industry, anyone who's been in their job for more than three years is probably significantly underpaid. That's just the reality, and people in the industry are figuring it out."

Here are some of the most significant, yet common, complaints I hear as to why DFH workers are dissatisfied.

Reviews and Raises in Demand

"My current company doesn't do annual reviews or consider regular raises."

DFH distributors are still largely owner-operated businesses. Many don't conduct regular reviews. Others don't set formal expectations and goals, yet still evaluate how well team members have met key performance indicators (KPIs). Frequently, consideration of raises is reactionary or sporadic and at the request of DFH employees. The companies in the industry that are able to provide merit-based raises have an advantage, and when we present a company client that does, it's always well received.

Many DFH professionals don't see it as an issue until I explain they could be receiving regular raises. Prices for everything have gone up and everybody wants raises to at least counter those increases. If employers don't consider raises regularly, it's understandable that employees will be attracted to an offer that pays them 10% to 20% more.

Sorry Software

"Our software is dated and inefficient."

I've worked with multiple top producers generating \$5 million a year at more than a 30% margin—yet they won't consider making a move to another supplier if they're not using their preferred software.

The rank and file of the industry may not be that extreme but they want something. At the very least, an established door and hardware software system (not Excel) that streamlines project management processes is attractive. As a recruiter, I get excited when I'm talking with a candidate that uses outdated systems or none. It makes it easy to demonstrate how they can do more with less time.

In Need of Support

"I'm not getting the support I need, such as an assistant project manager or detailer."

Top performing project managers know they have valuable skills and abilities that can make their company, and them, a lot of money. However, project managers have only so many hours in the day and only so

much bandwidth. To take productivity to the next level, many want support and are not getting it.

Adding insult to injury, candidates tell us all the time about the indifference owners/managers display toward adding support resources. We make multiple placements every year simply because top producers are overworked, not getting help and are sick of it.

In Need of Help

"They keep saying they're going to hire more people but haven't."

An unfortunate yet common situation is when owners/managers are aware that estimating, project management and detailing needs require increased staff, and they promise more support and then fail to do so. Many project managers are so dedicated to their customers that they'll work 50 to 60 hours a week (on salary) to get things done right. Some will feel their employer is taking advantage of that loyalty project managers feel toward customers. That only works for so long, and when we come across this situation, it is frequently at a breaking point.

Maybe But Maybe Not

"At the end of the year, the owner decides whether we get a bonus and how much."

DFH professionals resent these types of arbitrary bonus plans because an owner/manager is basically saying, "We'll pay you a bonus if we feel like it." Even worse is when a company doesn't commit to how much the bonus will be. Many employees won't tell their distributor boss they hate this sort of setup, but they tell us. When we're filling a position with a client that clearly defines how bonuses are paid and how much—it's over.

Who's Next?

"The company I work for has no succession plan. The owner is older than 60, and I have no idea what will happen if, God forbid, something awful happens to them."

If there's no clear plan for a number two to continue the business, should a primary principal pass away or become seriously ill, the uncertainty can erode the strongest of relationships. It seems this concern, or the seriousness with which it is being considered among DFH talent, is much stronger in the

past year than it ever was prior to COVID-19. If ownership is getting close to retirement age, and no plan is in place and shared, employees may ponder whether the company could be sold. It has the same destabilizing impact.

Fair Pay

"I know I'm underpaid."

More than any time in the past nine years that I've been concentrating on Division 8, talented and knowledgeable people in the industry know there are other employment options out there for them. They see peers and contacts at their company, and others, making moves.

With a lot of people changing companies, your employees know they're not changing solely for a shorter commute. In this industry, anyone who's been in their job for more than three years is probably significantly underpaid. That's just the reality, and people in the industry are figuring it out.

A common misconception is that candidates are recruited away from a company solely with dollars. It's true that candidates make moves toward more favorable situations. In almost every placement I'm involved with, the candidate will be earning more, or they'll have a greater upside going forward. However, that's not why they talk to me, listen to what my client has to offer, meet with them and decide to change teams.

Beyond compensation, there's always something else prompting concern, friction or dissatisfaction. The scenarios above are some of the most common I'm hearing today.

Before Trouble Begins

A chunk of all employed people in the United States, maybe as many as 40%, are perfectly happy with their job. They have no interest in talking with someone like me or going through the hassle of even considering a job move. On the other end of the spectrum, between 5% and 20% of employed

people may be actively looking for a new position, looking at job sites, submitting resumes, etc.

As a headhunter, I target the group in between those two: individuals that are not actively looking but are not entirely happy either. Typically, they're doing their job very well, and the underlying problem is not bad enough to do something—yet.

But the fact is, there is a problem, and something is bothering them. It's suppressed and buried for now. Eventually though, if the issue isn't addressed, it will become bad enough that it requires a remedy. The issue could be a need for more money or the respect associated with regular reviews and raises. It could be a need for support resources, quality software, a defined bonus plan or clarity that their company will be around in a few years.

What to Do About It?

If you are an owner/manager, evaluate whether the issues I've shared or something similar could be a brewing problem in your organization. If so, consider making adjustments with input from team members. Failure to address these types of issues makes it that much easier for another opportunity or headhunter to entice your team members to make a move.

For the DFH professionals who have been with a company for a long time, there are probably strong and convincing reasons why. Do not let one of these problems stew and go unaddressed and end an otherwise top-notch situation. My advice is to talk with management about the problem and potential solutions in a structured way, to give your company the opportunity to fix the issue.

I'm interested to know if you or your company has had similar or very different situations occur. Please send me a note if that's the case. +

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Design and Construction Industry



What is the current state of DEI in the design and construction industry and where is inclusivity headed in the future? A survey conducted by Dodge Construction Network reports on the trends.

BY AL RICKARD, CAE

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are increasingly common values in businesses across all sectors, including the design and construction industry.

To examine DEI trends, Dodge Construction Network published a 2022 SmartMarket Report, “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Design and Construction.” Funding was provided by the U.S. General Services Administration.

The report details and analyzes survey results gathered in Spring 2022 from architects and contractors.

As noted in the “Message From the Publisher” at the beginning of the report, the findings show that more DEI engagement “leads to better workplaces, greater ability to attract and retain workers, more innovation, better decision-making and improved collaboration.”

DEI Engagement

Engagement with DEI is in its formative stages across the industry. As shown in Figure 1, fewer than half of architects and contractors report participating in most DEI activities; the one exception is training, where more than half report offering training that promotes a more diverse, inclusive and positive workplace culture.

The report notes, “Contractors are most committed to training and practices that help them tactically with improving access to a skilled workforce. Architects, on the other hand, are more aspirational in their approach to DEI.”

FIGURE 1.
ENGAGEMENT WITH MOST WIDELY USED
DEI ACTIVITIES

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022

	Architects	Contractors
Offers Training That Promotes a More Diverse, Inclusive and Positive Workplace Culture	58%	54%
Considers Diversity and Inclusion When Selecting Other Team Members/Trade Partners	42%	28%
Code of Ethics That Includes a Diversity and Inclusion Focus	39%	39%
Leadership Training for All Staff Members	26%	24%
Leadership Devotes Resources to Encouraging Diversity	25%	14%
Staff Recruitment Extending Beyond Policies with Non-Discrimination Language	23%	19%
Formal Path for Advancement That Considers Leadership Diversity	22%	19%
Training on Unconscious Bias	22%	25%
Engagement of Underrepresented Populations (Including Training, Mentorship)	21%	21%

DEI Benefits

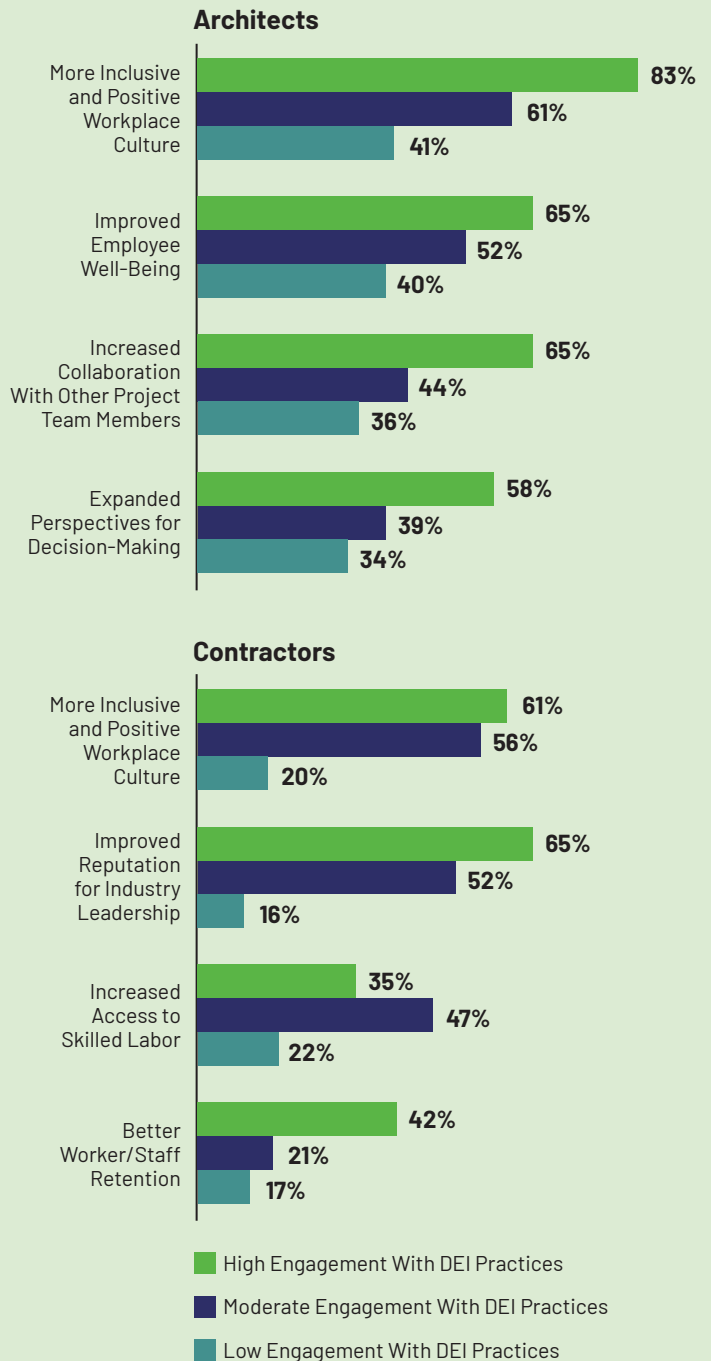
The different approaches to DEI between architects and contractors is also reflected in the benefits that each group perceives from engaging in DEI practices.

As shown in Figure 2, architects often find their DEI engagement make their firms better places to work, improve their collaboration with project stakeholders and expand their perspectives for decision-making.

The report adds, “Over half of architects highly engaged with DEI activities have better communication between leadership and staff, an increased ability to recruit workers, more commitment to their organization from younger staff members, and improved industry reputation due to that engagement.”

FIGURE 2.
MOST FREQUENTLY REPORTED BENEFITS OF
ENGAGING IN DEI ACTIVITIES

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022



“Implementing recruitment practices that include a DEI strategy holds the potential to attract more qualified applicants.”

A focus on addressing workforce challenges is evident in the DEI benefits identified by contractors. Two of the top four benefits for this group were increased access to skilled labor and better worker/staff retention.

The two benefits identified by contractors—a more inclusive and positive workplace culture and an improved reputation for industry leadership—are “indirectly related to this issue, as an improved reputation helps to draw workers and a better culture helps to retain them,” the report explains. “Over half of those highly engaged also report improved client retention and increased collaboration onsite.”

Drivers of DEI Investment

The report notes, “The top reasons that have driven current investments by architects and contractors in DEI engagement is trying to do the right thing and creating a more positive culture at their company. However, the best way to drive more engagement is to demonstrate that increasing their DEI engagement would improve their ability to attract staff and find new work.”

Figure 3 shows the factors that would drive future DEI investments—each of these was selected as one of the top three reasons by architects and contractors.

DEI Recruitment Practices

The challenge in recruiting qualified workers is a common refrain today among companies across all professions and industries, including the design and construction industry. Implementing recruitment practices that include a DEI strategy holds the potential to attract more qualified applicants.

As shown in Figure 4, the report identified these key findings:

- Twenty-seven percent of contractors do not have any formal recruitment policies.
- About half rely solely on utilizing standard nondiscrimination language in their recruitment policies.
- Less than 20% overall are utilizing programs as part of their recruitment strategy that help to diversify their workforce.

Company size is a major factor in determining how much DEI is considered during the recruitment process.

As shown in Figure 5, the report identified these key findings:

- Very small companies (those with less than 10 employees) typically don’t have formalized recruitment policies.
- Responses of small and midsize companies are similar, with great reliance on nondiscrimination language.
- About half of respondents at large companies are actively implementing programs to recruit field workers and office staff. While this still leaves room for growth, it also suggests that large firms may have useful best practices for recruitment that could be shared with smaller companies.

FIGURE 3.
FACTORS THAT WOULD ENABLE COMPANIES TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN DEI (SELECTED IN THE TOP THREE)

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022

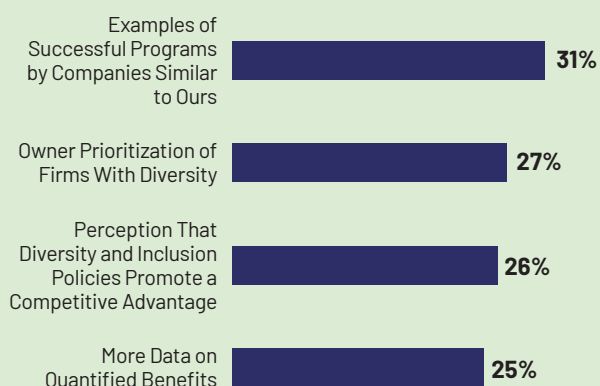


FIGURE 4.
CONTRACTOR APPROACHES TO RECRUITING NEW EMPLOYEES

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022

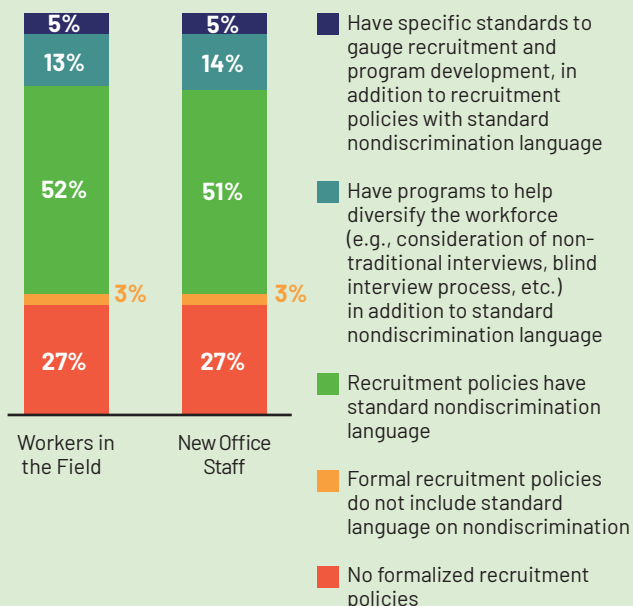
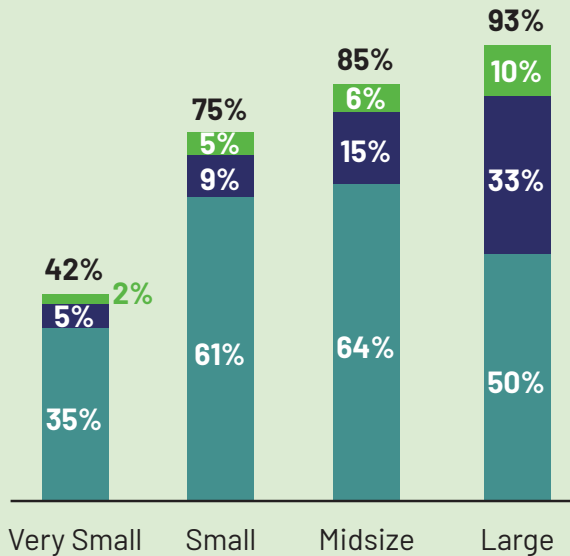


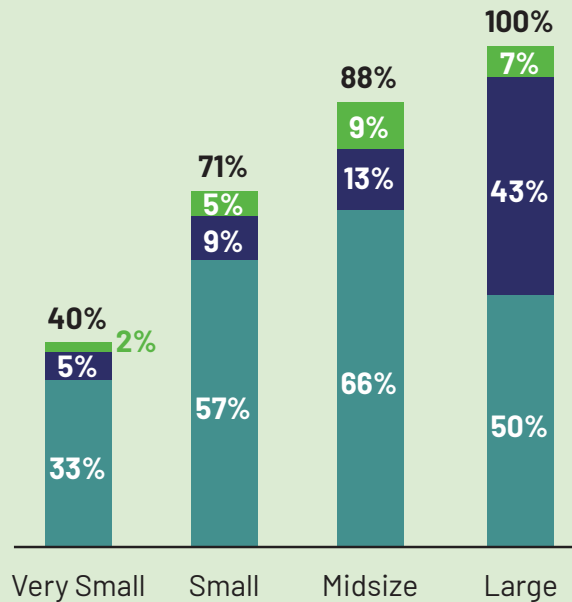
FIGURE 5.
CONTRACTORS THAT CONSIDER DEI DURING
RECRUITMENT OF WORKERS IN THE FIELD

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022



CONTRACTORS THAT CONSIDER DEI DURING
RECRUITMENT OF OFFICE STAFF

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022



- Have specific standards to gauge recruitment and program development, in addition to recruitment policies with standard nondiscrimination language
- Have programs to help diversify the workforce (e.g., consideration of nontraditional interviews, blind interview process, etc.) in addition to standard nondiscrimination language
- Recruitment policies have standard nondiscrimination language

DEI Training

More than half of architects (58%) and contractors (54%) offer training that promotes a more diverse, inclusive and positive workplace culture.

The report noted this training is a highly visible endorsement of DEI at these companies but that it must be reinforced by policies and practices to change the culture.

Most contractors (66%) also reported they provide skills training to jobsite workers, which can in turn increase the likelihood that their skilled workforce can be more diverse.

Industry DEI Challenges

When asked to identify the most significant challenges to increasing DEI efforts across the design and construction industry, architects and contractors listed these seven challenges (followed by the percentage naming each challenge):

- Lack of trained diversity and inclusion professionals (30%)
- Lack of confidence in the business benefits of diversity and inclusion (29%)

- Varying hiring practices across organizations (28%)
- Lack of coordinated efforts to provide outreach to underrepresented communities (24%)
- Lack of leadership on this issue (22%)
- Image of industry among job candidates (20%)
- Lack of industry standard for promoting underrepresented groups to leadership positions (19%)

The report offers this advice for addressing industry challenges: “These findings, especially when combined with concern expressed by respondents about finding diverse qualified candidates, suggest that the industry needs to find ways to encourage participation from more than those traditionally involved in construction.

“Specific examples of successful engagements with community organizations and training could help those interested in engaging in these efforts but who don’t know where to begin.” +

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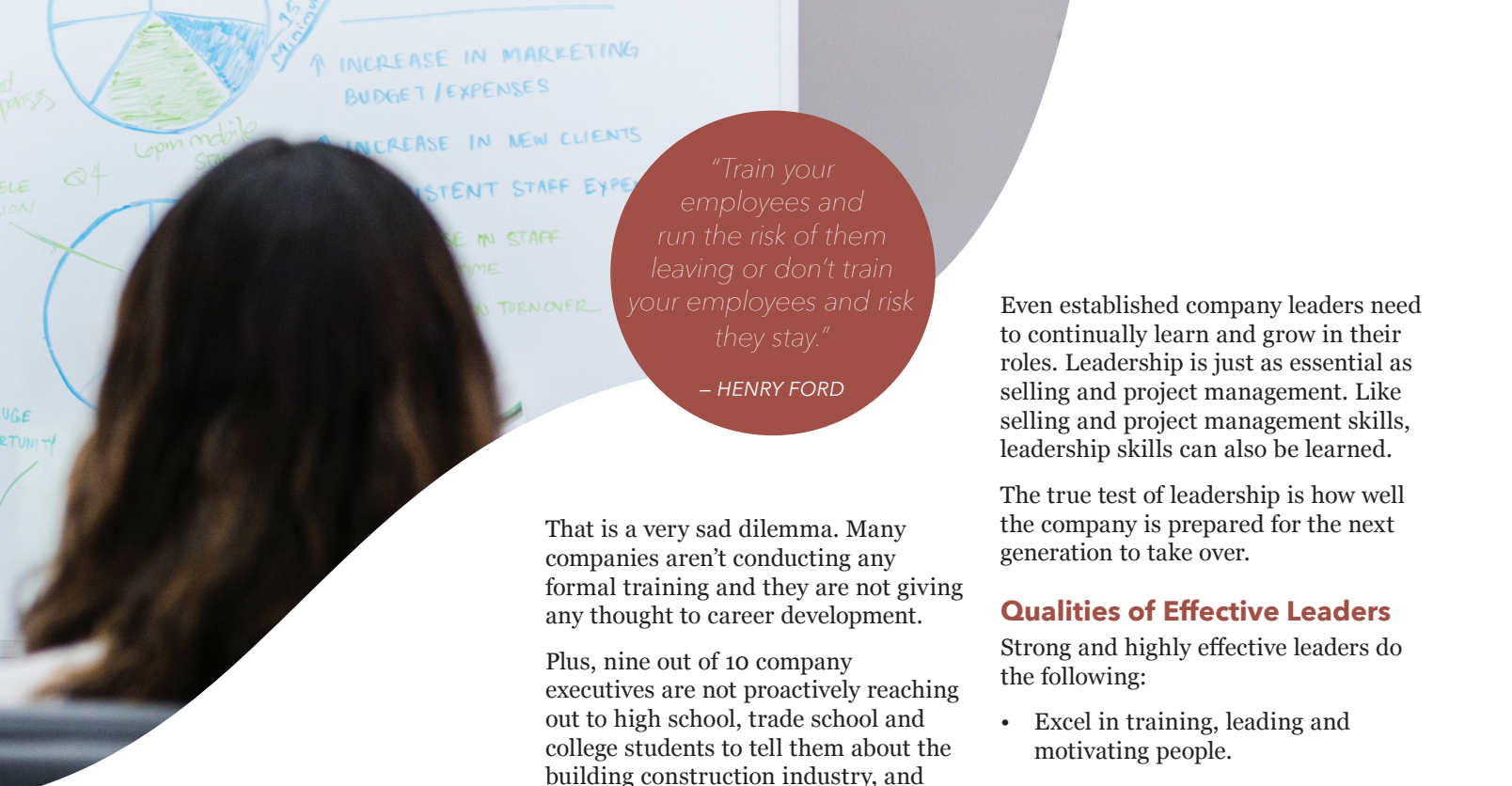
"The
greatest good
is what we do for
others."

— MOTHER TERESA

BY RICHARD VOREIS

Employee Training and Development Through Effective Leadership

Building leaders in an organization starts with training and development. Learn how to implement it and be inspired by words of wisdom from some of the world's top leaders.



As I travel throughout the United States, I always ask for the biggest challenge facing companies today and in the future.

More than 90% of architects, general contractors and subcontractors I talk to say they “cannot get enough experienced and skilled employees.” That applies to salaried and hourly employees. When I ask what they are doing about it, they generally say “nothing,” other than hiring people without any experience.

When I ask what they’re doing to train and develop the inexperienced people they hire, nine out of 10 companies say they are doing nothing formal.

When I talk to their employees, here’s what they say:

- “On-the-job training is how we handle it.”
- “We ask questions to learn our jobs.”
- “We learn from our mistakes.”
- “We don’t take time to train.”
- “We train with live bullets.”

“Train your employees and run the risk of them leaving or don’t train your employees and risk they stay.”

— HENRY FORD

That is a very sad dilemma. Many companies aren’t conducting any formal training and they are not giving any thought to career development.

Plus, nine out of 10 company executives are not proactively reaching out to high school, trade school and college students to tell them about the building construction industry, and more specifically doors and hardware. Co-op programs or summer internship programs in local schools have proven to provide future employees who often turn out to be great career employees.

All companies need to develop effective training programs. The good news is they’re easy to implement.

Start With the Basics

When someone is promoted within a company, leaders and managers should not assume their people can perform the same as or as well as they did in their prior jobs.

Hiring new employees from outside the company even if they have related experience is another challenge. Hiring an inexperienced person from outside the company is the ultimate challenge.

Each employee must be trained in the vision, mission and core values of the company’s business philosophy.

Training and developing employees in their specific job responsibilities is also required to sustain success. This is another major management responsibility.

By reviewing the basics with all employees, they either learn something new or the manager will reinforce something they already know. Either way, something is gained.

Even established company leaders need to continually learn and grow in their roles. Leadership is just as essential as selling and project management. Like selling and project management skills, leadership skills can also be learned.

The true test of leadership is how well the company is prepared for the next generation to take over.

Qualities of Effective Leaders

Strong and highly effective leaders do the following:

- Excel in training, leading and motivating people.
- Bring out the best in people.
- Optimize productivity without intimidation.
- Represent a role model with a high degree of ethical conduct.
- Demonstrate imaginative leadership.
- Communicate effectively to all employees.
- Balance negatives with positives, not just one or the other.
- Demonstrate leadership by example.
- Make an obvious contribution to the success of the company.
- Always do their best in the moment.

Closing the Training Gap

The lack of experienced and skilled people available today in business is a serious concern. The lack of formal training programs by so many companies is a compounding serious concern. However, hiring today is a big challenge. Many companies I talk to agree and are struggling with hiring for salary and hourly positions. If that’s you, you’re not alone.

With all this said, the following are ways to approach training that are easy to implement, not costly and work well.



"Doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment."

—OPRAH WINFREY

"Train people well enough so they can leave; treat them well enough so they don't want to."

— RICHARD BRANSON

Inspirational Leadership

"If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, then you are an excellent leader."

— Dolly Parton

This is a great mindset for all leaders to embrace. Excellent leaders are inspiring and their personal leadership by example sends a very inspiring message for others to follow.

Coaching Is for Everyone

"Everyone needs a coach. It doesn't matter whether you're a basketball player, a tennis player, a gymnast or a bridge player."

— Bill Gates

Best in class companies know they benefit from outside authorities, and coaching is a key ingredient.

In the most basic sense, coaching is a learning and development experience for top management. It also encourages responsibility and accountability, as well as enhances problem-solving skills, goal setting, communications, employee interaction and effective work habits.

Additionally, coaching keeps you on track when you're tempted to fall back into the old ways of doing things. Remember, change is good!

Employee Appraisals Are Important

"While almost every company has an appraisal procedure, few of them actually use it."

— Peter Drucker

Do you give every employee an annual performance appraisal every year?

If not, you need to start conducting annual performance appraisals of your employees. It doesn't have to be time-consuming or difficult, so don't use that rationale as your excuse. Our clients use a one-page performance appraisal specifically developed for salary and hourly employees.

Adapting to Change

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."
– John F. Kennedy

When new management tools and technologies are applied to time-honored processes, everything changes. Sometimes change is obvious and sometimes it's subtle, but it always has a profound effect.

Smart organizations are making a sharp break from old habits and deliberately adopting new ways of behavior, implementing new processes and embracing change.

When adapting to new ways and processes, training and development can maximize the success of employees.

Companies that cling to fond memories of their past successes and wish to emulate them as they "reinvent their future" are in big trouble. We like to say, "Standing still is just another way of falling behind."

With change comes choice. Take responsibility for generating new concepts, identifying new technology, thinking about different scenarios, and how to bring wisdom to your company and to your customers. That's the most sought-after change of all.

Leaders and Bosses

"People ask the difference between a leader and a boss. The leader leads, and the boss drives."
– Theodore Roosevelt

Let's explore several differences between being a boss or a leader in a contemporary business environment.

Where do you "fit?"

BOSS	LEADER
Talks	Listens
Demands	Coaches
Relies on authority	Relies on discussion, consent and teamwork
My way is the only way	Seeks opinions of others on the best way
Issues ultimatums	Seeks new ideas and plants ideas
Dictates employee objectives	Jointly establishes employee objectives
Says "I"	Says "we"
Uses people	Develops people
Takes credit	Gives credit
Places blame	Accepts blame
Focuses on negatives	Balances negatives and positives
Focuses on weaknesses	Addresses both strengths and weaknesses
Always solves employee problems	Expects employees to offer solutions
Portrays self-perfection	Admits failings as learning experience
Controls employees	Empowers employees
Micro-manages	Clearly delegates to employees

Woody Allen joked, *"In my house I'm the boss—my wife is just the decision maker."*

Think about that—bosses who seek power and control often lose it, while those around them become the real decision-makers and leaders.

Take Action to Improve

"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing." – Theodore Roosevelt

As you read the quotes and ideas in this article, you probably saw many opportunities to improve your company and maybe even yourself. You are not alone, because most people who read these quotes will also see these opportunities.

In other words, that's normal and to be expected. What's not normal is doing nothing to benefit your company and employees.

Be sure to make the best about what you have learned by implementing what you have learned in a very timely manner. +

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"Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people."

– STEVE JOBS

Workforce Trends for Specialty Contractors

The global construction industry is facing a critical shortage of skilled workers. A survey report from Dodge Construction Network and Procore Technologies explores the issue.

BY AL RICKARD, CAE



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The global construction industry is facing a critical shortage of skilled workers that impacts specialty contractors' project and company performance.

To report on this trend and identify ways the industry is addressing the shortage, Dodge Construction Network partnered with Procore Technologies to produce a SmartMarket Brief titled, "Top Business Issues for Specialty Contractors." It reports on a survey of 537 specialty trade contractors conducted in 2022.

This article reports on the workforce trends from this survey, which focus on talent and workforce development.

In addition to workforce issues, the publication reported findings about profitability and technology that were analyzed in the article, "Top Business Issues for Specialty Contractors," published in the January-February 2023 issue of *Door Security + Safety* magazine.

Nearly one-third of the companies surveyed are located in the United States; the remainder were divided almost equally among Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia/New Zealand.

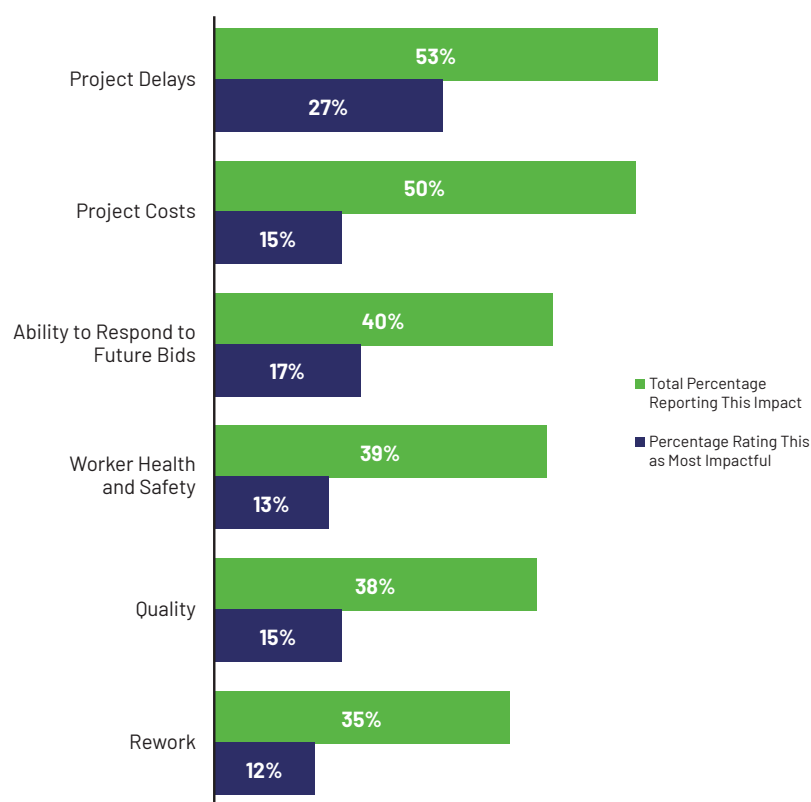
The Impact of Workforce Shortages

Specialty contractors were asked what percentage of their projects are being negatively affected by the current shortage of skilled workers. Among mechanical contractors—which include door and hardware distributors—41% reported a negative impact.

Digging deeper, seven major effects of labor shortages were reported, as shown in Figure 1. At least half of specialty contractors experience project delays and increased project costs. Among small companies, two-thirds reported project delays.

FIGURE 1. PERCENTAGE OF TRADE CONTRACTORS REPORTING NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LABOR SHORTAGES ON PROJECT ELEMENTS

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022



More than one third of companies (35%) also believe that workforce loss from retirements during the next five years will have a high or very high impact. In the United States, specialty contractors predicted that an average of 23% of their employees are likely to retire during the next five years.

Strategies to Address Workforce Shortages

When asked what company strategies they are implementing to counter the negative impact of labor shortages, specialty contractors most frequently cite construction technology investments to improve productivity.

FIGURE 2. STRATEGY-RELATED ACTIONS TO COUNTER THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LABOR SHORTAGES

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022

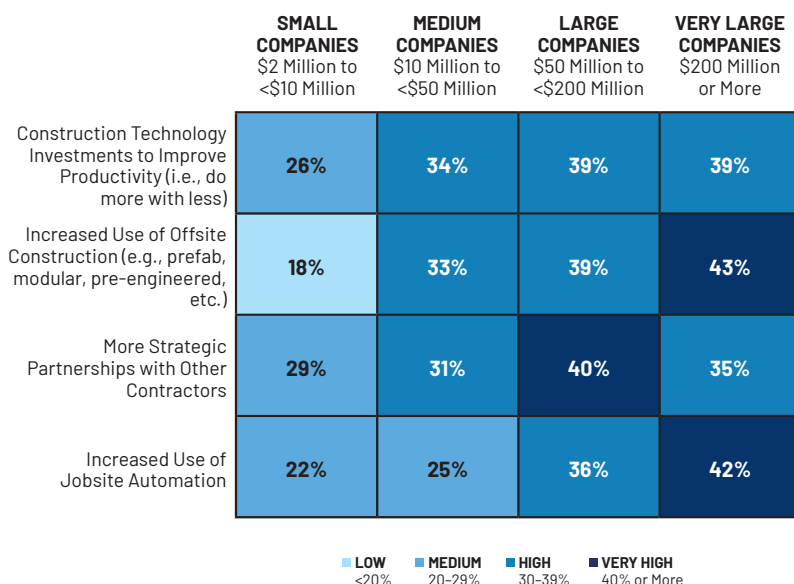
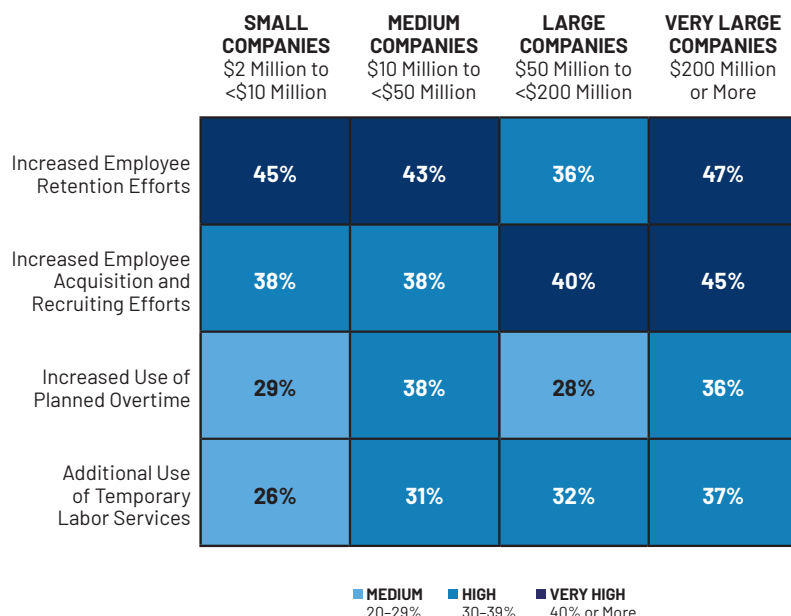


FIGURE 3. PERSONNEL-RELATED ACTIONS TO COUNTER THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LABOR SHORTAGES

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022



"The top focus is on keeping current staff, followed closely by increased recruiting."

The percentages vary directly by size, with an average of just one quarter of small companies citing these strategies, versus 40% of very large organizations.

In spite of these variations between company sizes, the total averages for each strategy are in a narrow range between 31% and 35%, indicating that they are all seen as potentially valuable, as shown in Figure 2.

When asked about personnel-related strategies, the top focus is on keeping current staff, followed closely by increased recruiting.

The average percentages identifying each strategy are in a broader range (32% to 43%) than the company-strategy measures addressed in Figure 2. This suggests that the most emphasis is being placed on retention and recruitment efforts, as shown in Figure 3.

Causes of Safety Incidents

Keeping workers safe is a concern for all companies. Mechanical contractors identified several causes of safety incidents, as shown in Figure 4.

The report also found that small companies more frequently say distractions cause safety incidents but they trail larger companies for every other issue. This suggests these

companies could benefit from a specific focus on reducing distractions.

Interestingly, more very large companies report insufficient new worker training, although larger organizations often have more training resources.

To obtain a complete copy of this report, visit www.construction.com/toolkit/Reports-Procure-Top-Business-Issues-for-Specialty-Contractors or scan the QR code. +

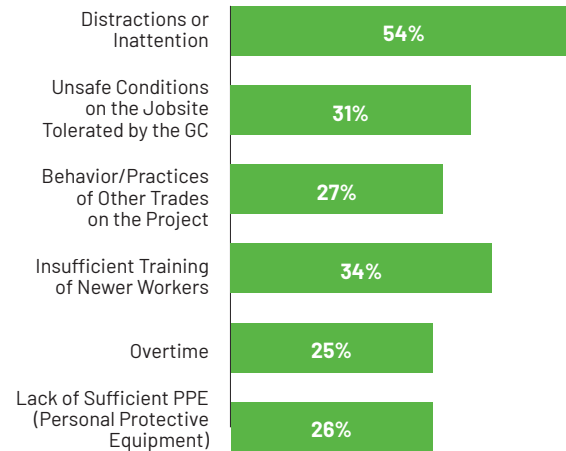


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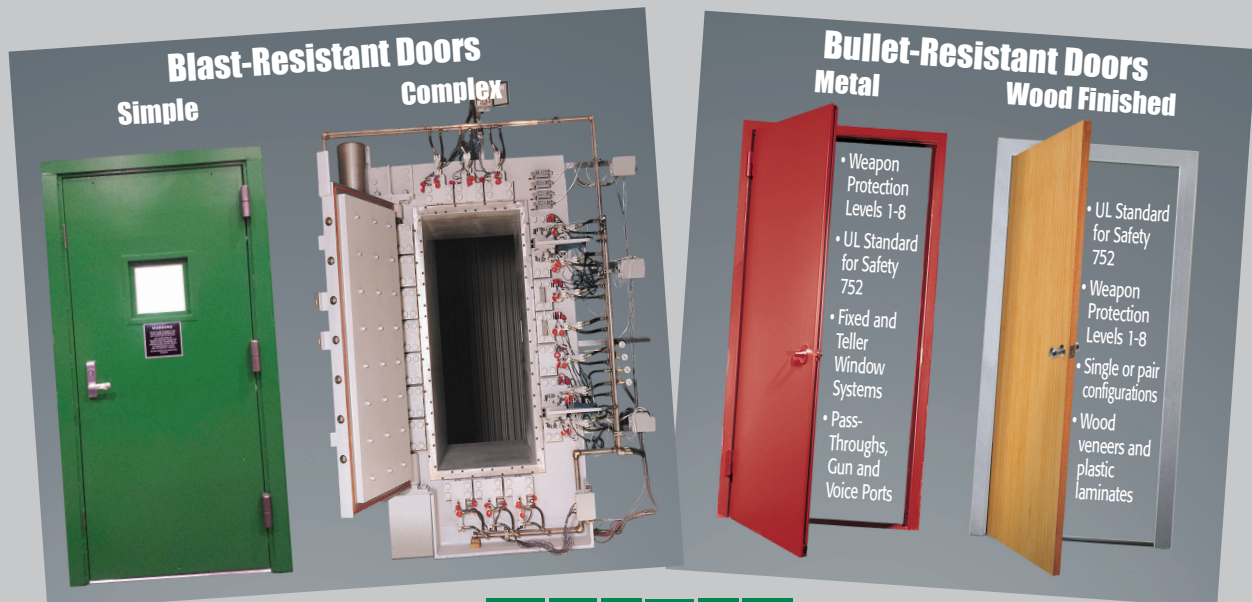
AL RICKARD, CAE, is Editor-in-Chief of *Door Security + Safety* magazine. Email: arickard@dhi.org.

FIGURE 4. TOP REASONS MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS EXPERIENCE SAFETY INCIDENTS

Dodge Data & Analytics, 2022



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An HR Perspective on the Security Industry



Sabrina Wilson

dormakaba's Sabrina Wilson shares her views on hiring trends and best practices for diversity and more.

BY THE SECURITY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in Security Sales & Integration magazine in September 2022. It appeared as part of the Security Industry Association (SIA) Women in Security Forum, an initiative to support the participation of women in the security field through programs, networking and professional growth events and thought leadership opportunities. Reprinted with permission.

Sabrina Wilson, Senior Vice President of Human Resources at dormakaba Americas, was recently named to the inaugural SIA Women in Security Forum Power 100, recognizing 100 women in the security industry who are role models for actively advancing diversity, inclusion, innovation and leadership in the community.

In this interview with SIA, she offers her views on human resources (HR) issues in the security industry.

How did you get into the security industry?

Being part of the security industry wasn't intentional for me. I was looking for the next opportunity after a sabbatical and trying to be strategic about what to do next. My criteria included: getting back into a manufacturing environment, returning to the Midwest to be closer to family, being part of a global organization and serving as an HR leader to continue my career path. With experience in a variety of industries, I did not target a specific industry.

A recruiter brought the dormakaba opportunity to me. Prior to that, this company and this industry were not on my radar. Two things attracted me to dormakaba. First, I saw new opportunities for me, as well as a role for HR to support overall business growth—both of which excited me. What sold me on dormakaba, however, was its strong purpose in making the world safe and secure so people can move about seamlessly. The company's commitment to its purpose was clearly evident. I wanted to help advance that.

How does your organization serve the industry?

dormakaba serves the security industry by remaining laser-focused on our commitment to make access in life smart, safe and secure for every place that matters. We are a trusted partner for access products, solutions and services. In addition, we are active participants in industry events and trade associations, and frequent contributors to media and educational programs. On the human side, we integrate and innovate best practices to attract, develop and retain top talent across the organization.

What types of job functions do women fill in your company? Is there diversity of roles in your company, or do women gravitate toward certain job functions?

You'll find women in all roles within dormakaba. We have women in nontraditional roles such as engineering, technology, manufacturing and supply chain. We also have women in functions they have gravitated to historically such as finance, HR, marketing and customer service. We need to attract more diversity and acknowledge that "diversity" can mean many different things.

This isn't limited to gender, ethnic or cultural diversity—it must include diverse thinking and recruiting from different industries to attract and retain top talent.

With more and more data that shows diversity makes a better workforce, what opportunities do you see for women in the security industry?

There are many new opportunities if we choose to think differently about our approach. Our industry has a strong sense of purpose: making the world more secure. While the gender lines are blurring a bit here and men are more vocal about this perspective, women are attracted to companies with a strong purpose.

Here's one example: When we look at security products used in schools and hospitals—two large, purpose-driven market segments for our industry—we see that many of the gatekeepers to sales are women. Having women who are selling, training and working with these decision-makers adds to dormakaba's ability to relate to its customers.


What impediments do you see for achieving this? What could remedy some of these impediments?

The security industry in general is not well known as a career path. At dormakaba, our products are not household names. People drive by our factories and offices and don't know who we are or what we do through name recognition alone. We need to be active in communities like universities and high schools to let people know about internships, apprenticeships and career options.

For midlevel professionals looking to change jobs, we need to brand and market our industry overall and engage with associations and chambers where candidates may be looking for career information. We typically don't use words like "branding" and "marketing" in HR, but it's our job to sell this industry to prospects.

What do you see as important trends in the industry? More specifically, what trends are you seeing in your HR leadership role with dormakaba?

The biggest industry trend I see is a hunger for data. Security is becoming less about having a key



and more about the data available with electronic access-driven security devices. Products still allow or deny entry, but they also track time, location, biometrics and other data that provides information and solves problems.

The impact on HR of this industry trend toward technology is compelling, and we're seeing a generational change in work styles. Baby boomers are retiring. Newer workers are more tech-savvy (which aligns with the security marketplace shifts) and are used to having research and feedback intelligence at their fingertips (again, similar to the data drive in our industry).

In HR, this means that these newer employees want information about their performance and career opportunities more frequently. If an organization can't provide this, then the worker is likely to leave. If we are going to attract and retain top talent, we must change our processes for career development and performance feedback using automation and technology. I'd like to say this is an evolution of our best HR practices, rather than a revolution, but with the volume of boomers exiting and new workers coming in, we have to move quickly.

If we define HR leadership in terms of years of service, we're losing an experienced workforce more quickly than we can replace them. COVID-19 accelerated this even more—people are deciding to get out of the workforce completely, pursue gig economy roles and generally reevaluate whether they need to go to work. We must act now.

What are the top challenges your company has faced in the last year?

First, like everyone else, we've seen the convergence of social and world of work issues from the global pandemic, employee turnover and inflation. The human element of the workplace has never been more important. In fact, I've been in HR for 30 years, and I haven't heard the word "care" as much as I have in recent years. In the past few years, we've brought life to work, so to speak.

We've had to navigate the very real issues of absence due to illness, quarantine and even death, as well as significant employee turnover. This affects all levels of any organization—not just dormakaba. The workload redistribution that results adds stress. Higher costs due to inflation

add wage pressures to the organization in order to attract and retain top talent.

Second, we must address the knowledge gap resulting from experienced employees leaving the workforce. It's a fine line. The knowledge of these workers can't be replaced item for item, and the knowledge base of new employees represents a complete paradigm shift in terms of how experience is defined, due to the fact that they are digital natives. They're bringing in new knowledge and skills that weren't present before and will have a positive impact on our business.

How do we navigate these issues? dormakaba has adopted a continuous improvement mindset. We're doing a better job of knowledge transfer from exiting workers to both remaining staff and new hires. We're also trying to take an active approach to retention and engagement by identifying pain points and concerns and figuring out how to address them.

Finally, we're not just making transactional replacements of one new person for one who departs. We're reevaluating each role. What did it look like? What does it need to look like? Does each role need to be replaced with the exact same skills? Replacement roles may look different.

What are the biggest opportunities your company—and the industry—are seeing?

Externally, the number-one opportunity is to attract people to the security industry as a career path. We're not well known. At dormakaba, we're using career development to help address this. We started our Rising Talent program in 2021 with 27 interns working on meaningful projects. In 2022, that number grew to 40.

Internally, we're working to improve internal programs for people development across our employee experience spectrum, from early talent to existing talent and experienced talent. Some HR statistics show that younger generations want to take on new jobs or roles every 2.3 years. We need to show that this type of career progression can occur within dormakaba.

What do you hope the SIA Women in Security Forum can achieve for the security industry?

Ultimately, I hope there isn't a need for the Women in Security Forum, because our industry

is reflective of a 50/50 balance ratio of women to men workers. To do this, we need to make our industry attractive to women in all functions and disciplines, and at all levels of the organizational chart.

What is your best advice for women in the industry?

Get engaged with different trade organizations, like SIA, that align with your career path. For me, this step has allowed me to get to know others in the industry and connect on challenges, network and receive and provide mentorship. That engagement creates community, and a sense of community makes you feel like you belong.

Who or what was the strongest influence in your career?

There have been so many! I've had mentors at different stages who have said the thing I needed to hear the most. For example, I was with an organization that challenged me to make a complete mind shift in how to deliver HR. I'm passionate about the role of HR as a business partner to the organization. I was asked to take on an internal HR role where I would oversee and develop 35 HR business partners across the Americas, which I interpreted as a functional HR role. I didn't want to be internally focused.

The chief HR officer, who is still a mentor today, told me to go do this for 18-24 months, after which I would be put back into a more traditional HR business partner role. It ended up being a highlight of my career. By changing my mindset, I had a chance to shape the future of so many HR business partners. We morphed from a company of HR generalists to one of true business partners with the ability to lead.

Sometimes you have to do something you don't think you want to do. My mentor saw something in me that I couldn't see in myself at that time. I wouldn't have discovered it if he hadn't pushed me.

How do you define success?

This is a hard question for me as an overachiever! Being functionally focused, I define success as improving the employee experience from candidate to retiree. It's an incredible opportunity to touch people with a positive experience and good benefits, help with a personal situation and create a work environment they want to be part of.

"Don't try to be what you think others and your employers or the industry want you to be. Be your authentic self."

As a business partner, I'm successful when HR can influence a business decision that meets the needs of employees and the business at the same time. Balance is not always easy, and how we deliver tough messages is very important. Not every experience will be positive, but we have a huge opportunity to demonstrate respect for humanity.

What would you say to new upcoming women in the industry?

I still consider myself new to this industry since I've been here less than two years. My advice? Embrace the challenges. This is a great industry with a strong purpose. There are so many ways we can make a difference in the lives of others through new product development, exploring new markets and solving problems.

Any final thoughts?

One of things I truly believe is that we must be our authentic selves. Don't try to be what you think others and your employers or the industry want you to be. Be your authentic self. When I first entered the workforce at a manufacturing company, I was the only woman in the room and I tried to be "one of the guys" by wearing dark pants, a white shirt and a scarf (my version of a tie). When I broke that mold and added color and jewelry, I started being who I am. It's exhausting to be anything other than yourself. +



SUCCESSING IN SUCCESSION

A father and son team at a door and hardware installation company are planning a management transition while addressing challenges in finding the next generation of installers.

BY NICHOLE BOTTINI

Golden Door Company (GDC) is an independently owned door and hardware installation company, specializing in custom metal work. President and Owner Greg Golden is beginning a succession transition as he ages out of the manual labor associated with the trade.

His case is not unique—the age of the average construction worker in the United States is increasing tremendously. “The average age of construction workers increased from 36 to 42.5 years between 1985 and 2015, and the proportion aged 55 and older increased from 12% to more than 20%,” according to a 2019 article, “Building a Sustainable Construction Workforce,” in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

Fortunately for Greg, his son Austin is currently his apprentice, so the transition should be smooth. However, the immediate succession of the business is not the primary concern for GDC. The two are

confronting the challenges of attracting new talent to the business to ensure continued growth and success, and they were open in sharing their insights and concerns.

Greg, as with many in the trade, came into the business with no knowledge of doors and hardware. Greg's brother was working for a door company where Greg helped out during summer vacation in high school.

"I was going to be an art student, but I realized that it was better to make money than to spend money on college," Greg decided.

After 10 years of working for his brother, Greg decided to branch out on his own, obtained a business loan, and Golden Door Company was founded in 1990. GDC began working with a large mid-Atlantic distributor as a subcontractor, which led to a plethora of opportunities in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Restructuring of local door and hardware distributors further contributed to GDC's success, as the company became a subcontractor for many other distributors.

Austin's involvement in the company was mandatory as the son of two full-time working parents, and was often taken to job sites with his father. Austin worked as a flooring installer while he studied journalism in college.

Greg offered Austin a position at GDC in 2010, which Austin accepted. "The pay was better [than the flooring job], I get to work with my family and help my dad as he aged," Austin says. His initial training was hands-on, on-the-job with Greg. He has since taken the initiative to take other classes and receive training from organizations such as Total Door Systems and Kaba Mas.

While Greg is confident that GDC will continue to grow and be successful under Austin's leadership, both Greg and Austin express concern regarding attracting new employees. "How do you tell people about 'this' [gesturing around the office of a local distributor] when 'this' is so ill-defined?" Greg asks.

Greg's inquiry is valid—door and hardware installers fall under a variety of subcontractor trades, none of which speak to what is actually involved in the trade. "Are we carpenters? Are we just working in construction? What do you tell people you do?" Greg asks.

Oftentimes general contractors do not use trade-specific installers for doors and hardware. These installations often fall to drywall, carpentry or other subcontractors. Austin says a lot of the current work

GDC has is around fixing work from unqualified installers. "How do we tell people how important the trade is?" Austin asks.

Greg and Austin believe that visibility and "exposure from all angles" of the trade are most important in ensuring that the next generation of workers will see it as an opportunity for a career, as discussed in the 2021 *Tampa Bay Business Journal* article, "Construction Industry Needs to Implement Workforce Development to Change our Youth's Perspective of the Trade."

Many trade schools offer construction as a field of study, and there's an opportunity for mentorship and internship there. Changing the stigma, stereotypes and inaccurate perceptions of skilled trades needs to be a priority as well, the article explains.

Greg suggests promoting the best parts of having an installation business: problem-solving, price and schedule control, flexibility and work/life balance: "My product is my artwork. I love solving the problems I confront onsite and using my analytical skills every day."

Austin spoke about the variety of locations installers visit as a benefit of the job, specifically mentioning the Library of Congress, the Pentagon and other secure facilities, and the Kennedy Center.

Greg concluded by simply stating the benefits of being involved in doors and hardware: "Doors are an old trade—we have to have doors, this business isn't going away." +

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Virtual Learning at Hager University

Hager Companies leveraged its established training program to enhance its e-learning environment.

BY ABIGAIL AYLWARD

As the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the need for e-learning environments, Hager University developed 15-minute courses for internal and external audiences.

INVESTING IN KNOWLEDGE

Developed as an investment in its people, Hager University has been an essential onboarding program for employees of Hager Companies, as well as a virtual training tool for all departments of the company, from product management to customer service and marketing.



Hager University is also accessed by associates in the manufacturing and distribution centers. Employees who design, build, market and ship the products see how their work fits in the

construction world. They also see how those products play pivotal roles with the security and safety of any building.

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest." This quote by Benjamin Franklin is also the mantra of Hager University and its e-learning platform for

the door and hardware industry. Simple, user-friendly and just 15 minutes per lesson are the basic elements of Hager University's model. The course modules are designed for novices and experts.

FREE EDUCATION FOR ALL

This virtual school offers an assortment of lessons, covering a multitude of door and hardware topics. This includes bored and mortise locks, electronic access control, STC Ratings, thresholds, weather stripping and more.

Whether someone is just starting their career in the door and hardware industry or needs a refresher course, Hager University has developed small, easily manageable segments to meet continuing education needs.

"Hager University provides bite-sized, easily digestible chunks of information that do not take huge amounts of time away from already busy schedules. And best of all—it's free!" says James Stokes, Director of Corporate Training at Hager Companies.

In addition to onboard training for employees, Hager University is an accessible learning platform to all in the door and hardware industry. From architects, contract hardware distributors and contractors to end users, Hager University is designed as a free, online education platform.

The curriculum is built to encompass basics, advanced courses and industry-related lessons, such as school safety and cloud-based access control. Currently, Hager University offers 16 paths and more than 60 individual lessons.

For example, the hinge path is a concentrated learning module of courses that includes Commercial Hinges 101, Commercial Hinges 201, Residential Hinges 101, Roton Continuous Hinges 101, and Stainless Steel Hinges 101. The Door Controls path contains lessons on how a door closer works, specific arm types and overhead holders, among others.

Learning about electronic hardware is also critical in today's marketplace. Hager University breaks down several types of electronic hardware products and how they work. For example, Power Supplies 101 is a helpful lesson to discover why power supplies are needed. It also covers the uses for different model types and the optional boards and accessories that are offered. The Electrified Hardware path has modules on electric strikes, delayed egress, switches and low-energy operators.

Better understanding of how access control and electronic products work increases awareness and improves coordination between the distributor, the design professional, the owner and others.

James Gammon, Corporate Training Manager at Cook & Boardman has made Hager University part of the



company's ongoing education offering. "At Cook & Boardman, we have been extremely excited to add the courses provided by Hager University to our current onboarding curriculum. The classes offered are a breath of fresh air. They are unique, challenging and offer a wonderful mix from beginner to advanced course curriculum. They are great for all users, whether brand new or with industry experience."

COVERING THE WHOLE INDUSTRY

In addition to its product-specific courses, Hager University has been designed to educate and build awareness of the door and hardware industry as a whole. It does this with its Industry Associations learning path that offers courses such as ADA—Meeting Accessibility Codes Builders Hardware Manufacturers Association (BHMA)101, BHMA 201, Sequence for Listing Hardware, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101 and UL—The Basics.

On the BHMA modules, Hager University collaborated directly with BHMA personnel. Working hand-in-hand with the organization, Hager University created two modular courses. One covered the role BHMA plays in the industry with its door hardware

As post-pandemic trends continue to reshape the industry, Hager University has kept pace by creating new online courses to address and educate these industry hot topics and trends.

standards for multiple product categories. The other provides an in-depth explanation of the BHMA certification process.

KEEPING UP WITH HOT TOPICS

As post-pandemic trends continue to reshape the industry, Hager University has kept pace by creating new online courses to address and educate these industry hot topics and trends.

These courses have evolved into more concentrated modules. The course on Touchless Door Solutions discusses the pandemic and how it changed society to be more concerned about physical interaction with objects. As a result, facilities are taking a second look at how people move through their buildings and what products can help them reduce the spread of germs and bacteria.

Another course delves into school classroom safety. The Sandy Hook Advisory Commission, formed in the aftermath of the 2012 tragedy to

study how to improve school security, addressed door security in its first recommendation: "All classrooms in K-12 schools should be equipped with locked doors that can be locked from the inside." This statement has been interpreted in multiple ways and life safety has often been compromised. The goal of this lesson is to provide up-to-date information on code-compliant mechanical or electronic solutions, as well as knowledge of the associations that advocate for school safety.

EASY E-LEARNING

With e-learning growing at a rapid pace, Hager University continues to create a robust curriculum and offer enhanced, interactive courses. With a new interface, these courses continue to engage students with supported text, images, video and interactive quizzes. These new enhancements allow students to learn at their own pace in a user-friendly environment. Another recent innovation from Hager University gives students the ability to print certificates for each learning path they have completed.

"Continuing to develop strong new talent in our industry is extremely important," says Ben Boomer, President, Twin City Hardware. "Programs like Hager University have a tremendous impact on our ability to teach the employees of tomorrow." +



Understanding power supplies is an important topic at Hager University.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAGER COMPANIES.

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Building the Talent Pipeline at Allegion

Allegion early career programs bring new talent into the industry.

BY AMANDA HOFFMAN



A group of Allegion Early Career Program participants on a field trip to a local high school with Lori Greene, the Allegion Manager of Codes and Resources and author of *iDigHardware.com*, learning about school security products and code issues.

In the door and hardware industry, it's imperative to bring new talent into our organizations. Since becoming a standalone company 10 years ago, Allegion has offered several early career programs meant to bring new talent into the industry by training, developing and assimilating these professionals into our culture.

Within our commercial sales organization are Allegion's two largest early career programs: the Sales Development Program and Specification Writer Apprentice Program.

Neither program requires prior industry experience; we aim to find candidates who align with our values, have an interest in our mission, and are open to learning and growing with us. We continue to evolve each program yearly with feedback from past and current participants to ensure we meet their changing needs.

Our Sales Development Program is a rotational training and development program designed to enable an individual with no prior selling or security hardware knowledge to succeed in the ever-evolving world of door hardware and security products. New employees are guided through a mix of classroom, field, office and factory settings to teach them sales skills and about Allegion products and solutions. Our goal is to empower our new team members with the confidence and knowledge needed to add value within different sales channels at the company.

This program is currently sponsored by Jamie Lyn Callahan, a channel sales manager at Allegion and past participant in the Sales Development Program. Callahan explains that the curriculum is intentionally designed and continuously refined to ensure we are best preparing our yearly cohort to succeed personally and professionally in the security industry.

In addition to product and industry knowledge, we incorporate our values, soft skills, teamwork, engagement and fun into the training for these learners.

"I am privileged to be part of our early career program, coming full circle from my early days, helping to guide the journeys of our young professionals and learning from them in turn. I love the enthusiasm and fresh perspectives our cohorts bring to our existing teams; we are truly fortunate to have them here at Allegion," Callahan says.

Our Specification Writing Apprentice Program prepares participants for their future role of providing access solutions by creating door hardware specifications.

In the first segment of this immersive training program, participants engage in classroom-style training with others in

our early career program cohorts. During this time, they learn about our industry, products and codes, along with other relevant skills.

In the final segment of the training program, our participants get real-world experience at their regional sales offices. This instills foundational knowledge and provides experience writing specifications with the help and supervision of our more veteran team.

Kevin Braaten, who designs and delivers our training curriculum, directs the Specification Writing Apprentice Program. One of the greatest highlights participants share with us after going through this program is getting to learn from Braaten, due not only to his product knowledge but also his embodiment of Allegion's company values and leadership behaviors.

Braaten says he takes immense pride in being part of this program and is driven by Allegion's core values, namely, "Do the right thing."

"This program has provided me the opportunity to give back to [the] industry and my employer, both of which have afforded me the luxury of providing for my family and educating the future leaders of our [profession]," Braaten says.

Our programs could not succeed without the input and inspiration provided by past participants, Allegion leadership, and our general culture of learning and collaboration. At Allegion, we are fortunate to have passionate industry veterans who have paved the way for future program participants. We depend heavily on their ideas, feedback and insights to help shape future iterations of each program.

We recently implemented a sponsor for the Specification Writer Apprentice Program to best align the program with our evolving business needs. Grant DeLay serves as our program sponsor and is an architectural services manager and past participant of the Sales Development Program.

"Allegion's Specification Writer Apprentice and Sales Development Programs have been attracting and developing a new generation of leadership in the door hardware industry for many years now. The extensive hands-on training curriculum, field experience and overall investment in the programs is top shelf," DeLay says.

In fact, some of our past program participants act as our steering committee for current and future programs. Marc Facca is currently a sales consultant in North Texas and has leveraged his experience during and following the program.

Facca has helped us identify opportunities for internal and external networking by hosting a speaker series where current and former program participants can engage with business leaders across Allegion. Through his involvement in the Security Industry Association, we've connected our newest talent with others new to the security industry.

Facca attributes his success at Allegion to the networking opportunities he received early in his career and shares that some of the best advice he received from mentors within Allegion is to get outside your comfort zone and find someone to *hitch your wagon to*.

Facca's advice is to intentionally increase your connections; you may meet with 10 people and find that one person you really click with—that one person can have an immense impact on your career trajectory, he explains.

"Looking back at myself interviewing with Allegion as a 20-year-old college student, if you had told me I would do the things I've done and moved around to different parts of the country and experienced different sales roles, I would not have believed you. It's been a fun journey that I didn't see coming—I didn't realize I'd be as passionate about our industry and our company as I am," said Facca.

Past participants of our programs express a feeling of surprise—many did not know of our industry before joining Allegion.

Sunu Sohn is an Allegion specification consultant who participated in our Specification Writing Apprentice Program. Sohn shares that when he was finishing his bachelor's degree in biology, he realized he didn't want to pursue the medical field for his career.



Finding what works best takes a willingness to challenge prior assumptions, learn as you go and maintain awareness of the needs of our evolving talent market and industry.

He learned about our program from a friend and wanted to try it to learn something new. Sohn was surprised to learn how technical it was and amazed at the resources available to teach people with no prior experience to be experts in the field.

"Through my experience in the program, Allegion went from a door hardware company to a safety company. Although I didn't end up in the medical field, I'm still protecting people with our values of 'be safe, be healthy' and 'do the right thing' at the forefront of every decision I make," Sohn says.

While many of our program participants come straight to us from school, we've also had success bringing people onto our team who are looking for a change of pace or shift in their career.



Allegion's 2022-2023 Sales Development and Specification Writer Apprenticeship Program Cohort during their first week with the company.

Sharda Kanappa is a current Allegion specification consultant and was also part of our Specification Writing Apprenticeship Program. After beginning her career in human resources for a large retail organization, Kanappa realized her strengths and interests were in a more technical and hands-on realm.

"At that time, I was letting the fear of switching industries hold me back—I felt like I didn't have a fail-safe plan to develop the skills I needed to explore something new. Through this program, I was given the opportunity to move to a new state to be trained in a new industry and given the tools to start a new career path. It seemed almost too good to be true," Kanappa says.

Investing in these programs has become a staple for Allegion's talent strategy, especially as it relates to sales and specification consulting roles, which often require knowledge of our industry for employees to feel they are maximizing their successes.

Thanks to our early talent development roots, advocates within our business and human resources champions, we are fortunate to have these programs and employees who choose to give back once they graduate.

Through these programs, we have experienced various outcomes, one being that the state of our sales organization is strong. As our veteran employees retire, we have proactively infused new talent into our business to transition their knowledge, experience and special elements of our Allegion culture to our future teams.

This has also helped us be more proactive with our succession planning. We've even seen early career program participants grow into leadership positions and become subject matter experts within our company, both inside and outside our commercial sales organization.

As the programs have grown in popularity internally, we've identified opportunities to share best practices for training and onboarding with all Allegion new hires, no matter where they are in their career or whether they have prior industry experience.

Additionally, these programs have helped us increase the diversity within our organization, and ultimately within our industry. Creating opportunities that require no prior industry experience allows us to target a broader reach of talented candidates with a diverse set of skills, experiences and backgrounds.

For anyone looking for new ways to attract, train and retain new talent in their organization, we encourage you to reflect on where you are today and identify resources within your organization who can share knowledge and pass along the organizational culture to the next generation, step by step.

Finding what works best takes a willingness to challenge prior assumptions, learn as you go and maintain awareness of the needs of our evolving talent market and industry. +

AMANDA HOFFMAN is Human Resources Business Partner at Allegion. Email: Amanda.Berggren@Allegion.com



The ASSA ABLOY Academy website features a streamlined user interface.

Leveraging the Resources of ASSA ABLOY Academy

A leading distributor talks about how Academy programs helped it become a total solutions provider.

BY HEIDI PASCALE

The door, frame and hardware segment of the security industry is advancing at a rapid pace. Demand for electronic access control (EAC) and electrified door hardware especially continues to grow.

From the latest wireless EAC and intelligent lock solutions, to a wide variety of unique specialty doors and decorative options, new products are launched regularly. Expectations for flexible workspace security and compliance with updated codes and regulations are also constantly evolving.

Keeping up with it all requires paying close attention to industry news, trends and guidance from door opening experts. That is especially true on the design and procurement side of the profession. For locksmiths and systems integrators, an ongoing commitment to expert training is essential for gaining the knowledge, hands-on experience and certification that helps ensure proper installations.

Staying ahead of the game is even more critical if a company wants to expand its services and become a total openings solutions provider.

EXPANDING TO A TOTAL SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

A leading contract hardware distributor was intent on being a premier distributor of doors, frames and door hardware when it started its business several decades ago. Today it provides end-to-end opening solutions services that include pre-install and turnkey field installation.

According to the distributor's director of corporate training and development, "Requests from building contractors drove us to grow in this direction. Many were having a hard time finding carpenters and subcontractors that had the skills to meet installation and integration demands, especially as hardware and systems have become more sophisticated."



A full range of technical installation skills are taught through the ASSA ABLOY Academy.

Since mechanical and electro-mechanical hardware has evolved so much over the years, it takes dedication to learn how to install a product properly, and how to turn it over to the owner so they understand how the product should work and how to maintain it. This skill set builds trust with clients. It establishes a distributor as a subject matter expert who can recommend the best hardware for an opening and a reliable, trained team to install it.

The director says that once they identified the necessary steps, the training department expanded quickly. A key component was to create a program that could take someone fresh to the industry and train them on all the products, solutions and manufacturers they might encounter.

"We introduce them to plans and specifications," the director says. "And

we teach them how to use our ERP (Enterprise Reporting Program) that covers our transactional processes. They learn everything from how to generate packages, write purchase orders and fill out machining orders, to how to track shipments and schedule deliveries.

"Ultimately, we offer the full breadth of everything involved in the door industry, compressed into about eight different onboarding classes. And of course, we include specific training for installers and systems integrators. It's truly a career path management system, and ASSA ABLOY Academy has been a key contributor to its success."

IDENTIFYING THE NEED

Adding these services to the contract hardware distributor's traditional business turned out to be a visionary and fruitful decision. As a result, the distributor has

grown to more than 70 locations across the United States—half of which have installation crews. This expansion meant hundreds of employees needed training and continuing education to achieve and maintain a consistent level of expertise companywide. This would apply whether employees were new hires or already well-versed.

"We formed our training department four years ago. As we grew and acquired branches, we realized that processes weren't streamlined across the board," the director explains. "We hadn't nailed down what field installers were doing or capable of from one market to the next. The same issue applied to our project managers and estimators. So, we did a deep dive into jobs analysis and identified operational procedures that best fit the company's model for optimizing productivity."



When somebody knows that the company is investing so much time and resources into them and their career path, there's a sense of ownership in that.

BUILDING A CAREER PATH TRAINING PROGRAM

Originally, the training process relied on a lot of internal resources, pairing new hires with experienced team members. But that ended up cutting into seasoned employees' schedules and productivity, which caused their own workload to back up.

"We needed an alternative," the director says. "So, we went to our manufacturer vendors and said, 'We've got hundreds of employees we need to train right now, and we have new hires joining us all the time. What resource do you have that we can lean on for training?' And that's how we were introduced to ASSA ABLOY Academy. It had it all, hands down. It's been a fantastic partnership ever since."

The Academy offers a vast library of knowledge about the industry and has expert trainers that are readily available.

"Because we specify ASSA ABLOY products and understand their benefits and how and where they work best, we likely could have developed our own training curriculum," the director explains. "But since there's so much content already available through ASSA ABLOY Academy, it made more sense to lean on their resources instead. They helped us customize and package a plan specific to our needs."

For example, there is an onboarding package for new hires that covers their learning track for the first three months. Then, based on progress and specialization, the distributor consults with the ASSA ABLOY Academy to determine the next level of training. From that consultation, a package is created for the following nine months.

Along the way, situations may arise that require specific in-person ASSA ABLOY Academy training either at a branch or Academy training center. Also possible is a remote learning opportunity

or a hands-on experience during a scheduled stop of the Academy's Mobile Instructor-Led Training (MIT) Showroom.

CURATING THE CURRICULUM

"It's easy for us to find and choose the Academy courses that make the most sense," the distributor's director says. "Navigating the Academy catalog on its new website is very easy with the streamlined user interface. We can quickly find exactly what we're looking for. We like how training content is to the point and focused, and how we can access and deploy it as qualification packages. We can roll up onboarding, continuing education and master classes, and deploy them based on user skill level and experience in the industry. The Academy is great at helping guide us whenever we need insight."

The company's employees have completed nearly 2,400 onboarding course packages since they began ASSA ABLOY Academy training two years ago. Each of those packages includes up to six courses. The ability to package training by skill level ensures that users do not become overwhelmed. It also helps them absorb the content more effectively.

The distributor's team has provided positive feedback on how easy it was to learn and understand terminology specific to our niche industry, such as "equal rabbit." The ability to respond intelligently to what installers, project managers and contractors are talking about helps build credibility and confidence.

Employees are enthused about training and want more. That is why the contract hardware distributor invests a great deal of energy into creating its continuing education programs.

"As we probe and discover specific areas our employees need to focus on,

we consult the available courses that the Academy offers and curate those into additional levels," the director says. "Sometimes it's about advanced material on order writing, master keying, or codes and standards. Or it could be an orientation on a new product solution."

The onboarding package for someone just entering the industry involves approximately six hours of online learning. The full continuing education program consists of 10 levels, totaling 120 hours. For those focused on distribution and managing the distributor's ERP system, it's about 75 hours of in-person training. Spread out over a couple of years, employees spend an average of two hours a week on training—time well spent.

TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE VALUE

The benefit of training and continuing education extends well beyond getting people up to speed and keeping them up to date so the distributor can excel at taking good care of its customers.

"When somebody knows that the company is investing so much time and resources into them and their career path, there's a sense of ownership in that," the distributor's director says. "There's a spirit of 'the company believes in me, they're willing to invest in me, so I'm going to invest it back into the company.' That's invaluable when it comes to retention, recruitment and, of course, developing trustworthy expert service." +

HEIDI PASCALE is Senior Director of Experiential Marketing, Training, and Professional Development at ASSA ABLOY Door Security Solutions. Email: heidi.pascale@assaabloy.com.



CODE RESOURCES AND TRAINING AVAILABLE ON DEMAND



LORI GREENE, DAHC/CDC, FDAI, FDHI, CCPR, is Manager of Codes and Resources at Allegion. She can be reached at lori.greene@allegion.com or idighardware.com.

FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS, I HAVE DEDICATED MY TIME TO THE CODE REQUIREMENTS THAT APPLY TO DOOR OPENINGS, OFFERED TRAINING AND SUPPORT, AND PARTICIPATED IN CODE DEVELOPMENT. I USE IDIGHARDWARE.COM AS A WAY TO MAKE THIS INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL. UNDERSTANDING THESE REQUIREMENTS IS CRUCIAL FOR ANYONE INVOLVED IN SPECIFYING, SUPPLYING, INSTALLING OR MAINTAINING DOORS, FRAMES AND HARDWARE.

Since the theme of this issue of *Door Security + Safety* is talent and workforce development, this month's column includes some of the code-related resources that I've shared on the site. All are free and available on-demand, providing a great way to learn more about the model codes and referenced standards.

DECODED COURSE

iDigHardware.com/decoded

The Decoded course is an introductory four-class series that covers the code requirements applicable to doors and hardware. The course is based on the following codes and standards:

Decoded Series

- **Class 1 – Introduction to Codes + Accessibility Requirements**
- **Class 2 – Fire Door Assemblies**
- **Class 3 – Egress and Life Safety**
- **Class 4 – Codes for Electrified Hardware**

Lori Greene

DAHC/CDC, CCPR, FDHI, FDAI
Allegion, Manager – Codes & Resources



CRASH COURSE IN CODES

CLOSINGSPEED
USEGROUP
DEADBOLT
OPENINGFORCE
OCCUPANTLOAD
EGRESS
AHJ IBC ADA
NFPA FIREDOOR
PANICHARDWARE
ACCESSIBILITYEXIT
MAGLOCKDOORS
LOCKSET

Lori Greene, DAHC/CDC, FDAI, CCPR
Manager, Codes & Resources - Allegion

- International Building Code (IBC)
- NFPA 101 - The Life Safety Code
- NFPA 80 - Standard for Fire Doors and Other Opening Protectives
- ICC A117.1 - Standard for Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities
- ADA Standards for Accessible Design

Each recorded class is less than one hour long, and additional resources and exercises are included. Classes in the Decoded course cover the following subject areas:

- Class 1: Introduction to Codes and Accessibility Requirements
- Class 2: Fire Door Assemblies
- Class 3: Life Safety and Egress
- Class 4: Codes for Electrified Hardware

SHORTCODES SERIES

iDigHardware.com/shortcodes

This series of short segments on various code requirements can be used as a start-to-finish education on the codes that impact door openings. Also, you can jump straight to the topic you want to learn more about. The classes include videos, articles and additional information on various code requirements. Each class is designed to take no more than 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

There are five modules in the ShortCodes series:

- Introduction to Codes (3 classes)
- Accessibility Requirements (12 classes)
- Fire Door Assemblies (15 classes)
- Life Safety and Egress (13 classes)
- Electrified Hardware (6 classes)

WEBINARS

iDigHardware.com/webinars

For more in-depth information on a particular subject, there are recordings of my past webinars on the Webinars page of iDigHardware. The webinars currently available include:

- Code Changes Affecting Classroom Security
- Panic Hardware—When, Where and Why?
- Introduction to the Code Requirements for Electrified Hardware
- Decoded: Touchless Solutions for Healthy Environments
- Decoded: Delayed Egress and Controlled Egress Locking Systems
- Decoded: 2021 Model Code Update
- Crash Course in Codes



ARTICLES

[iDigHardware.com/articles](https://www.idighardware.com/articles)

The Decoded column first appeared in *Doors & Hardware* magazine in December 2010, and it has run continuously since then. Each article covers a topic in detail, with code references provided for additional research. The Articles page of [iDigHardware.com](https://www.idighardware.com) includes all of the past Decoded articles, as well as articles published in other trade journals. There are currently more than 150 articles in total.

ALLEGION CODE REFERENCE GUIDE

[iDigHardware.com/guide](https://www.idighardware.com/guide)

The first version of this resource was created more than 20 years ago. It has evolved into a 40-page guide that includes the door-related highlights of the codes and standards commonly used in the industry. The most common requirements related to door openings are summarized in the guide. Paragraph numbers help locate the full text in the adopted codes. In addition, there are in-depth articles on code requirements for electrified hardware, fire door assembly inspections, code requirements for panic hardware, codes affecting door closers and a classroom security fact sheet.

The guide is updated every three years when new model codes are released. The next update is due in 2024. The PDF can be downloaded from the site, and hard copies are also available.

All these resources can be accessed at any time and at no charge. Some may be used for continuing education units. A new post is added to the site each weekday, so subscribing to email notifications is a great way to make sure that no important information is missed. The ACE Network can be contacted for support on individual code questions. +



EARN YOUR DHT:

DOOR + HARDWARE TECHNICIAN CREDENTIAL

The Door + Hardware Technician (DHT) credential demonstrates the competence to provide product and code application, detailing, estimating, and project management skills on projects with an intermediate level of complexity of occupancy type. Individuals will be tested on topics such as doors and frames, keying, codes, hardware, construction documents, project management, and electrified hardware and access control. The exam is available through computer based testing with our partner Kryterion. It is comprised of 150 scored questions and must be completed within a 4-hour timeframe.

**Not sure if you're ready?
Take our free practice test and find out!**

// *What a great experience. The handouts offered with the testing beforehand came in very handy. The testing center was easy to work with, and seemed to have knowledge of why I was there."*

– Jon Swanson, DHT, AHC

// *Overall great experience. Great way to test. Nice atmosphere, nice staff. Questions directly related to DHI classes and real world experience."*

– Ron Martinez, DHT, CDT, CCPR

PRICE: \$400 for members; \$750 for non-members



Visit www.dhi.org/DHT for details.





RADIO FREQUENCY DOOR INSTALLATION IN SCIFs



BOB MCCLUNEY is President of Krieger Specialty Products. Email: bmccluney@kriegerproducts.com.

Tech Tips highlights useful technology tips for door installation and service. If you have an idea for a Tech Tips article you want to submit, contact *Door Security + Safety* Editor Al Rickard, CAE, at arickard@dhi.org.

A SENSITIVE COMPARTMENTED INFORMATION FACILITY (SCIF) IS A SECURE ROOM WHERE SENSITIVE INFORMATION CAN BE VIEWED AND/OR DISCUSSED TO MAINTAIN THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SECURITY AND PREVENT OUTSIDE SURVEILLANCE.

Because all information systems equipment releases electromagnetic energy, there is a risk of sensitive information being emitted in such a way that it could be recovered. As a result, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and other government agencies protect this information using SCIFs, which use a radio frequency (RF) shield constructed with conductive materials to achieve what's known as a "Faraday shield." A Faraday shield is a six-sided cube comprised of four walls, a ceiling, and a floor, and it is the basis of any RF shielded enclosure, such as a SCIF.

Proper installation of the RF door to a SCIF is critical to maintain its shielding integrity.

Through the Intelligence Community Directive (ICD) 705, the United States government has established guidelines for the physical and technical security standards for SCIF construction and maintenance.

As the point of entry and exit from a SCIF, the RF door plays a critical role in maintaining the RF shielding effectiveness required (expressed in decibels, SE dB). It must be designed to reduce levels of electromagnetic emissions and block external RF noise from entering the shielded enclosure.

INSTALLING RF DOORS IN A SCIF

Conducting an appropriate evaluation of a shielded enclosure whether it is a new construction or an existing one is crucial. For new shielded enclosure designs, typically the specifications

and/or standards are part of the procurement negotiations with regard to frequency, fields and SE dB to include the construction type that the RF door will interface with.

SCIF WALL CONSTRUCTION

The ICD minimum standard is for three layers of gypsum wall board (GWB). This includes two layers of 5/8-inch GWB, one 3 5/8-inch stud, and one layer of 5/8-inch GWB for a total thickness of 5 1/2 inches, as shown in Figure 1.

Some wall constructions may also use four layers of GWB as described above, with an additional layer of 5/8-inch GWB on the uncontrolled side.

ACHIEVING A FULL FARADAY SHIELD

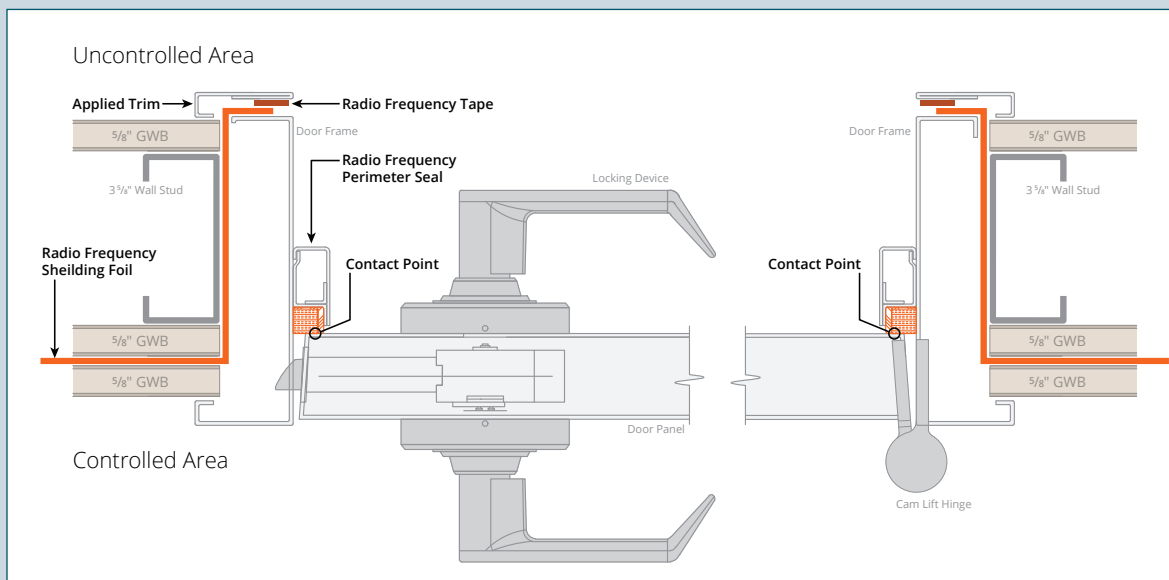
It is essential that the complete RF door assembly—the threshold, jambs and header—is properly connected to the RF foil in the wall and conductive materials on the floor of the SCIF Faraday enclosure.

RF door threshold installation requires the floor to be level and flat with the RF conductive flooring material in place.

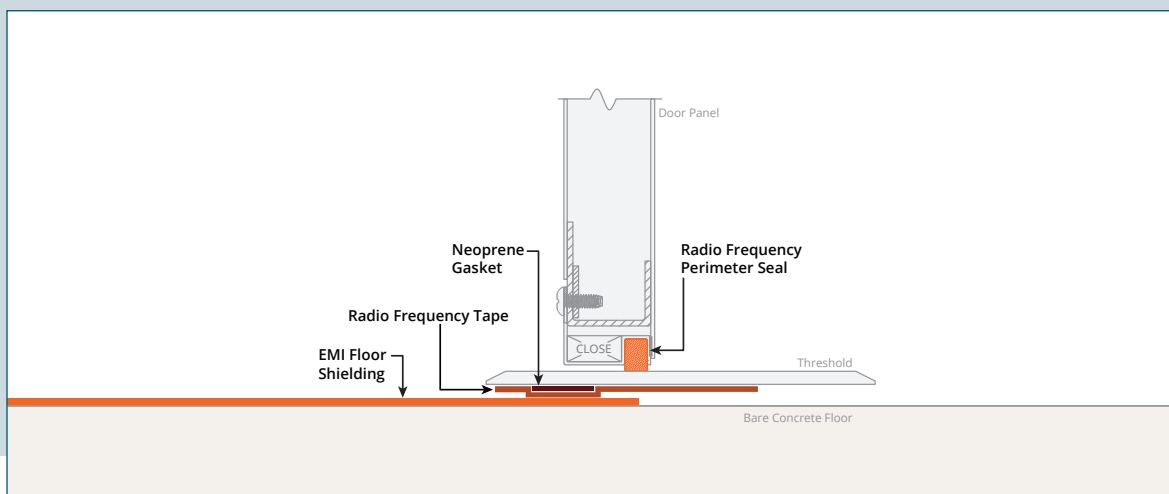
INSTALLATION TIPS

FRAME

- Because wall thicknesses vary, a slip-in type frame uses a simple design that allows more flexibility for the installation of RF applications, including easy installation post-wall construction.



**FIGURE 1.
TOP VIEW**



**FIGURE 2.
ELEVATION**

- It is imperative that the RF foil from the wall is integrated into the frame underneath the trim and the material is clean and smooth upon application.

THRESHOLD

- When placing the frame into position, be sure to check for positive contact between the RF shielding tape, neoprene gasket and EMI shielding material used in the floor, as shown in Figure 2.
- Do not use any wedge-type door stoppers as this can cause damage to the pre-installed RF neoprene gasket under the threshold.

PAINT

- Do not paint over the RF door seal, as paint can inhibit RF shielding properties by preventing uniform contact between the two conductive surfaces.
- Rockwool can be used as an acoustical deadening filler; do not grout the frame on RF assemblies.

DOOR ACCESSORIES

- Additional openings and conduits for accessories near the frame may impact the RF shielding performance of the door; EMI filters must be installed to eliminate conducted emissions coming and going in to the RF shielded area.

COORDINATE WITH TRADESPEOPLE

Lastly, but most importantly, be sure to inform installers, painters, and any other tradespeople working onsite that they are working with a special-purpose door for RF shielding. Not only is it extremely expensive, but it must be handled with extreme care to ensure proper installation and integrity of the SCIF's Faraday shield. +



CONGRATULATIONS!

The following door security + safety professionals recently received DHI credentials, certifications and certificates.

(List current as of February 1, 2023)



CERTIFIED FIRE + EGRESS DOOR ASSEMBLY INSPECTOR (CFDAI)

DHI has launched the CFDAI to help FDAs elevate their profile to the end user and grow their inspection services. In addition to the opportunities of becoming certified and taking continuing education, CFDAIs receive a badge and digital seal as part of this new program. This provides identification in the field and the ability to digitally stamp inspection reports.

Patrick Carriere, CFDAI
Allmar, Inc.

Christopher John Eaton, CFDAI
Allmar, Inc.

Jan Hoffe, DHT, CFDAI

Jose Otalora, CFDAI
MarKey Life Safety, LLC

David Silva, CFDAI
Allmar, Inc.



DOOR + HARDWARE TECHNICIAN (DHT)

This credential is earned by demonstrating the competence to provide product and code application, detailing, estimating and project management skills on projects with an intermediate level of complexity of occupancy type. This is the first level of technical credential earned for technical competence to assist contractors and building owners with basic construction project issues.

Adam Olk, DHT
Performance Door and Hardware, Inc.

Luke E. Swan, DHT
Cook & Boardman Group, LLC





For more information on DHI education, certifications, credentials and certificates, contact education@dhi.org.



DOOR + HARDWARE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATE (DHIA) CERTIFICATE

The DHIA certificate recognizes individuals who have achieved a basic technical understanding of product and code applications. Recipients have completed two online, self-paced classes and passed the exams.

Cesar Acosta
Negwer Door Systems

Khalid Osman Ahmed
Almanashy Doors
Company

Adesola Akindele
CP Distributors, Ltd.

William Barbour
CECO Door, An ASSA
ABLOY Group Brand

Emily Bergman
Oregon Door Consultants

Dmitry Berman

Chris Bosworth

Matthew Brizland

Gary Claude, Jr.
Health Choice Enterprises,
LLC

Grace Dalangin
AccessSMT Holdings Ltd. -
Kelowna, BC

Elizabeth Diaz
Central Valley Hardware
Company

Mark Fahle

Josh Farkas

Greg Fechter
HCE

Diedra Finney
Kdh Doors & Hardware,
Inc.

Zach Freach

Kubra Gedikaskan

Brad Gisch
Cook & Boardman Group,
LLC

Haydee Grijalva
Haley Brothers, Inc.

Mark A. Grunza Jr.
Union Wholesale
Company

Kathleen Hagn
ASSA ABLOY Door
Security Solutions

Trent Harrell

Randall Harris

Austin Haynes

Ganesh Hegde

Jesse Husketh
Jeske Hardware
Distributors

Maria Jimenez
Select Door and Frame
Inc.

Jack Kaminski
Walsh Door & Hardware
Co.

Samantha A. Kepple

Dave Kraus
M&D Door - Brooklyn, NY

Greg J. LaBossiere

Norbert Lagaya
CP Distributors, Ltd.

Ray Larson
Horner Commercial Sales

Naomie Lévesque
Les Agences Robert
Janvier Agences, Ltd. -
Montreal, QC

Amy Luebke

Mckinley Martens
CP Distributors, Ltd.

Angel Massey
Erlanger Hardware
Consultants

Pete Matthiscyk
Anderson Lock Co., Ltd.

Rebecca Matthiscyk
Anderson Lock Company
Door Division

Jonathan Mayfield
CP Distributors, Ltd.

Alexis McDonald
Alexandra McElhenney

Geoff McFadden
Apex Industries, Inc.

Brendee Medina
Olmsted

Krishnamohan
Mohanakumar
Hallmark Hardware
Corporation

Chris Montgomery
Montgomery Hardware
Company

Jason Moody
Aptitude Intelligent
Integration

Matt Murdoch
Precision Doors &
Hardware Division of Cook
& Boardman Group

Padmavathi
Nandhakumar
ASSA ABLOY - Door
Opening Solutions DUBAI

Sandra Nieto
Trudoor LLC

Tami Pearson

Jakob Ryan Peebles
S & S LLC | A Division of
ISEC, Inc.

Jeremy Power
CP Distributors, Ltd.

Kathy Prewitt
Colorado Doorways, Inc.

Avery Ransome

Len Reimer
CP Distributors, Ltd.

Justin Rheault
D&M Industries, Inc. -
Moorhead, MN

Mark Robinson
University of Alaska
Fairbanks Campus

Benda Rodriguez
USA Wood Door

Manasa Bai RY
Allegion

Eric Scheller
Spokane Hardware
Supply, Inc.

Kristin Schmidt
dormakaba

Nathan Schmidt
Builders Hardware and
Supply Co., Inc.

Paul J. Tabii
C-ME Trim Company Inc

Rahul B. Talele
BDS Doors And Hardware

Alexandria Torio
CP Distributors, Ltd.

Nichole Wayman

Alex Weaver
Kinship Group LLC

Cameron Webb
Kelley Bros.

Dominick Whitworth
Haley Brothers, Inc.

Matthew Wilder
Door Engineering Corp.

Tory Woodard
Capitol Aluminum and
Glass Company

Mohamed Zubair Iman



NEWS FLASH: REMOTE WORK IS HERE TO STAY



JASON BADER is Principal of The Distribution Team. He is a holistic distribution adviser who is passionate about helping business owners solve challenges, generate wealth and achieve personal goals. His podcast, "Distribution Talk," can be found at www.distributiontalk.com and through most podcast applications. Phone: 503-282-2333. Email: jason@distributionteam.com. Website: www.thedistributionteam.com.

I WAS SPEAKING WITH A COUPLE OF CLIENTS RECENTLY, AND THE SUBJECT OF REMOTE WORK AND WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS CAME UP. IN ONE OF THE CONVERSATIONS, I WAS SPEAKING WITH THE OWNER OF THE BUSINESS, AND SHE WAS STRUGGLING WITH THE IDEA OF REMOTE WORKERS. THIS WAS NOT THE WAY SHE GREW UP IN THE BUSINESS, AND SHE WAS NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS DYNAMIC WE'VE BEEN LIVING UNDER FOR THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS.

In the second conversation, I was speaking with a department head. They were struggling with an owner who was clearly against the concept of remote work and barely made accommodations during the height of the pandemic. The owner was clearly in the "this is a passing fad" camp and saw no reason to recognize the changing dynamic of work.

In both of these situations, the work environment is being challenged by owners that fail to see the writing on the wall. Remote work will be a part of your future and you might as well get used to it.

Like it or not, we are moving to a decentralized work environment. The pandemic, for all its upheaval, taught us that many functions in our organizations could be performed away from the traditional office environment. Technology was already in place to allow us to do this, but many of us just discovered the functionality.

MENTAL BARRIERS

Besides the fear of losing productivity, there are several other barriers that prevent business owners from embracing a remote work concept.

If I can't see them, how do I know they're working? This mentality demonstrates a clear lack of trust and relationship with the workforce. When management fails to connect with its team members, trust breaks down.

I would challenge the communication skills of any manager who fears working with a remote team member. Because they only know one way to convey expectations, the potential to lead a non-premise-based employee is unsettling. Too many managers allow ego to creep into their communication style. Successful leaders understand that it is not about the employee learning how to interpret direction. Conversely, it is the leader's responsibility to learn how to communicate their expectations in a way that the employee can absorb the direction.

CULTURE KILL

I hear the "culture" argument being thrown around when trying to defeat the remote work scenario. Again, this is a fear-based argument. Remote work will not kill your company culture. Was it really that fragile to begin with?

Culture is not built by people working in cubes and passing each other in the hallway. Culture thrives when the associates take pride in the organization. Employee satisfaction is huge driver of culture. When associates' needs are being met, and they feel heard, culture thrives.

For some, the ability to work remotely has greatly enhanced their personal well-being and life balance. The ability to do valuable work, earn a decent living and be in a comfortable environment can

drive employee satisfaction. Who cares if they don't dress up, drive to the office and ride the desk? It's about the results, not the path, right?

SOMEONE HAS TO BE HERE

Some of the roles in the organization are not eligible for remote work. Operational teams and customer-facing roles need to be on-premise. Someone has to work in the warehouse, stand at the counter and deliver the product. This is where I see the fairness argument pop up. If this set of employees is required to be in the office, then it's not fair that we let certain roles work from home.

Do I have to remind everyone that life isn't fair? Not all roles are created equal. Do we have a flat pay rate for all employees? Of course not. But wouldn't that be fair? I know that I'm going a bit far here, but the whole argument that everyone should come to the office because some are required is weak at best. I believe that it masks senior management's inability to figure out how to get past their own fears associated with the decentralized work model.

BARRIERS TO REMOTE

I want to throw out one of the barriers that I believe has a lot to do with the reluctance to embrace a remote work policy: property ownership. (Cue the hate mail.)

Many distributorship owners own the real estate in a separate holding company that houses the locations. It's common to have a mix of leased and owned properties. This is a solid wealth-building strategy for the owner, but it can lead to poor decision making.

My father, who owned some of the properties, was very frank about this. He knew that he stayed in a location way past the point of bursting at the seams because he owned the dirt. The



corporate argument that the company will save money on office space if it allows remote work does not resonate with the private building owner. They are not going to be saving themselves anything. If they allow remote work, they may feel kind of foolish retaining a facility that just houses corporate staff.

RECRUITING INCENTIVE

Beyond associate satisfaction, there's another silver lining to the great shift to remote work: recruiting.

Companies are no longer bound to recruiting people within driving distance. Without this natural barrier, the candidate set just multiplied. There are so many talented people who have chosen to live in a place that fits their lifestyle. I live in a place like this. Frankly, those who relocated here during the pandemic are the most eager to be

productive. Their goal is to make a living in a place of their choosing. Are they really going to jeopardize that by slacking off? I don't think so.

Those of you still struggling with this change of work environment have two choices: adapt or die.

Ok, it's not that dramatic. You have the opportunity to find peace with this new decentralized work environment, or you can hang up the cleats. Quit trying to push the boulder uphill. The struggle and angst in your company will distract you from the really important things like making a profit and crushing the competition.

This is not a hill you want to die on, and you might just find that your people will rise to the occasion. Good luck, and know that I am always here to help. +

ARE YOU *STILL* LEAVING MONEY ON THE TABLE?

The very first Profit Improvement Report—written 31 years ago—focused on the fact that most firms do not reach their full profit potential. Alas, all these years later, that is still true.

The typical firm in the industry continues to produce an adequate level of profitability. At the same time, the high profit firms consistently produce a higher level of profit. Quite simply, typical firms are leaving money on the table.

This report examines the difference in performance between typical and high profit firms. It will do so from two important perspectives:

- **The Size of the Profit Gap:** An analysis of the actual differences in profit between two DHI members of the exact same size
- **Closing the Profit Gap:** Some specific suggestions for moving from the typical category to the high profit one

THE SIZE OF THE PROFIT GAP

According to the Industry Financial Benchmarking Report published by DHI, the typical member firm generates \$20 million in sales volume in a typical year and produces a pre-tax profit margin of 5% of sales. In dollar terms,

this amounts to a profit of \$1 million. While the number is modest, it tends to be produced year after year. It is adequate and comfortable.

A high profit firm with the same dollar sales produces a pre-tax profit margin of 11% of sales, or \$2.2 million. That's a difference of 120%. In short, the typical firm is missing out on a major profit opportunity.

The profit gap is not only an issue today; it also represents a long-term challenge. A high profit firm has the capability to invest more in new technology to improve the firm's efficiency. It also has more funds to invest in inventory and accounts receivable as the firm grows its sales, as well as funds for the possible purchase of other, less profitable firms.

Moving from typical to high profit performance is not a one year undertaking. Any "one year plan" is doomed to fail. The key is to make systematic improvement in performance over *time*. The three areas where such small but steady improvements can be made are sales, gross margin and expenses.

Clearly, any profit improvement program must incorporate all three of these into the plan. For analytical purposes, it is useful to see how much of an improvement in each individual factor would be required to reach the goal of being a high profit firm.

CLOSING THE PROFIT GAP

Exhibit 1 summarizes the improvement needed in each specific factor to close the profit gap. The first column of numbers reflects the typical firm's performance. The last three columns—sales, gross margin and expenses—indicate how to move to the \$2.2 million profit figure.

Sales: This column reflects 60% more sales at the existing gross margin percentage. This means that both cost of goods sold and gross margin increase at the same rate. The key to the profit result is the impact the sales increase has on operating expenses.

Payroll and fringe benefits increase by the same 60% rate as sales. This may seem to be an unlikely event. However, historical data indicate this is a very valid assumption. Over time, sales and payroll expenses have increased at the same exact rate. The rate is not identical every year, but over the span of time the two grow in unison.

The non-payroll expenses are assumed to remain constant. These expenses generally increase with inflation, not sales. The sales scenario assumes that the increase in sales is in physical volume and not the result of price increases. That is why the gross margin percentage remains constant. This makes the expense assumption reasonable.

Gross Margin: In this scenario, the firm increases the gross margin dollars by 20% while holding sales constant. The margin increase came through more effective purchasing. With no sales increase, expenses remain constant. The net impact is to add 6% to the firm's gross margin.

It is important to note that while a 60% increase in sales is required to reach the high profit level of profitability, the margin increase required is only 20%. Gross margin will always increase profit faster than any other change in the firm's financial structure.

Expenses: The improvement required in expenses to reach high profit performance lies between that for gross margin and sales. In this specific case, a 24% reduction in expenses is required. This means that expenses as a percent of sales decline by 6%.

DR. ALBERT D. BATES is Principal of the Distribution Performance Project and a Senior Advisor to Benchmarking Analytics. His latest book, "Profit Guide for the Small Distributor," is available online at Amazon and Barnes & Noble. It covers concepts that every decision maker should understand.

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EXHIBIT 1 THREE POTENTIAL PROFIT IMPROVEMENT SCENARIOS FOR THE TYPICAL DHI DISTRIBUTOR

Summary Income Statement—\$	Current Results	Alternative Routes to High Profit Performance		
		Sales	Gross Margin	Expenses
Net Sales	\$20,000,000	\$32,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000
Cost of Goods Sold	14,000,000	22,400,000	12,800,000	14,000,000
Gross Margin	6,000,000	9,600,000	7,200,000	6,000,000
Payroll and Fringe Benefits	4,000,000	6,400,000	4,000,000	3,040,000
All Other Expenses	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	760,000
Total Expense	5,000,000	7,400,000	5,000,000	3,800,000
Profit Before Taxes	\$1,000,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000

Summary Income Statement—%				
Net Sales	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Cost of Goods Sold	70.0	70.0	64.0	70.0
Gross Margin	30.0	30.0	36.0	30.0
Payroll and Fringe Benefits	20.0	20.0	20.0	15.2
All Other Expenses	5.0	3.1	5.0	3.8
Total Expense	25.0	23.1	25.0	19.0
Profit Before Taxes	5.0	6.9	11.0	11.0

The hierarchy of effective profit improvements is always gross margin, followed by expenses and then sales. Every plan to improve profitability must keep this hierarchy in mind. The issue is how to accomplish this.

Sales and expenses need to be examined as a single unit. In practice, an increase in sales almost always results in higher expenses while expense-reduction efforts have the very real potential to reduce sales. The challenge is to identify opportunities where both sales and expenses work together.

The primary opportunity in this regard is to thoroughly review the cost to serve different transactions. Inevitably such an examination of transaction economics

suggests that too many transactions are unprofitable. Correcting this means increasing the average transaction size; that is selling more items in each individual transaction. The impact on expenses should be minimal.

Gross margin improvement is almost entirely a pricing issue. The challenge is that the old saying, “The dumbest competitor on the market sets the prices,” is taken too literally. In reality, there are likely some pricing opportunities that are larger than commonly believed.

The greatest improvement potential lies in pricing the often-maligned D items in the assortment. The challenge is that most firms believe they have already

priced these to the maximum extent possible. Realistically, there is usually a large opportunity to stretch the price matrix even further.

D items are almost always bought when they are absolutely needed, often in an emergency. The value added with these is availability. It is a value that needs to be optimized to the greatest extent possible.

MOVING FORWARD

The profit gap between typical and high profit firms continues to exist. Closing the gap requires developing specific plans for controlling expenses in relationship to sales and generating a higher margin on those sales. +



READERS' PHOTOS

BY MARK J. BERGER, FDHI

You've kept them coming, so here's a fresh batch of "I can't believe what I saw" photos from our intrepid readers.

A HALF BLOCKED, FULLY TIED TOGETHER

Rob Slaybaugh, The A. G. Mauro Company

Rob was out shopping and couldn't help but notice the clear signage on the door, including the "Do Not Block" sign on an opening with a blocked path to one of the doors. The panic bars are tied together with a numbered plastic security seal that's supposed to break away when forced. It looks pretty thick—I wonder if it actually breaks away with less than 15 pounds of pressure.



B HOLD THE HOLD OPEN

Scott A. Sabatini, DAOC, FDHI, CFDAI, IQP, RCI, CSI, CCPR, Door + Hardware Consultants

Scott doesn't look for code violations as he walks through a building, but they always seem to be clear as day. Here's a door with a hold-open that's held open by a wedge in the floor. That wouldn't be an issue if the opening wasn't fire-rated, but Scott checked and it surely is!





C SEMI-PERMANENT HOLD-OPEN DEVICE

David L. Neuner, Jr., CSI, CDT, D.L. Neuner Company, Inc.

We could probably focus an entire column on creative uses of bungee cords. David Neuner, a DHI Governor, observed this interesting method of making a restroom door “touch free.” The screw in the wall is a nice touch.



D IF THE BALL FITS...

Vince Giannini, Gensteel Doors

I had a special talent of getting the ball caught between the rim and backboard when playing basketball. That’s not the case here—this is a creative method of holding a door open. Vince calls this a “new and very advanced way of keeping an exit door open.”



E THEY SEEM TO BE EVERYWHERE

David Klein, Securitech Group, Inc.

David likes to count to one, as in “one motion to exit.” So he instantly sees anything on a board which could impede that and brings it to the attention of those on the job site tour. Unfortunately, he has way too many of these pictures.

F AMONG THE ITEMS ON AN INSPECTION CHECKLIST...

Greg Cliff, CHA Companies

Greg is a security engineer with a great eye. His first observation here was the symmetry of the exit devices slanting downward toward the hinge sides of adjacent door, versus the outer doors in the array, which are nice and level. Part of the annual fire door inspection program is ensuring that all hardware is mounted properly and operating properly. This should be part of a regular maintenance review and promptly repaired.





MARK J. BERGER, FDHI, is the President and Chief Product Officer of Securitech Group, and a Past President of DHI and Chair of the Builders Hardware Manufacturers Association Codes & Government Affairs Committee. All "Real Openings" photos were taken in public spaces with the goal of highlighting the prevalence of code violations and the need for vigilance to save lives. **If you see something, say something.** To submit a photo for this column, email real.openings.dhi@gmail.com.

The images shown here are not intended to reflect upon any specific manufacturer or products but are intended to help build awareness around the everyday code violations that occur in buildings over time, despite our members' best efforts to provide solutions to secure the life safety and security of the building occupants.



G HOOKS BUT NO CROOKS

Al Rickard, Door Security + Safety Magazine

Even our editor Al Rickard has caught the bug. Al has supplied photos before (the first was from a DHI convention host city!) and this one looked worthy of Real Openings. Here is his full report: "I stopped at a gas station in Pennsylvania and found this questionable security setup at the back door. The exit is partly blocked by stacks of plastic containers and the door is pulled shut using two cloth cords hooked to the door handle, attached to an s-hook wedged behind the end of a wall. It might discourage crooks from breaking in but the door has no handle to get in from the outside anyway."

ACTION PLANS THAT ARE SPECIFIC AND TARGETED



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IN THE PAST TWO ISSUES OF *DOOR SECURITY + SAFETY*, WE SHARED FIVE GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING EMPLOYEE ACTION PLANS. THE NEXT TWO GUIDELINES ARE PRESENTED IN THIS COLUMN.

If management and staff are held accountable for the success of the company, then your company will be much more successful.

ACTION PLAN GUIDELINE NO. 6

Establish specific action plans.

As a reminder, action plans are what employees do in support of the company's top priorities. They make management and staff accountable for achieving success. Action plans indicate how the company's top priorities will be accomplished by the employees.

With action plans, generalities don't get the job done. Here are some examples of poor action plans that are too general.

- "Increase sales" does not indicate how to make it happen; when revenues are increased by \$1, the action plan has been accomplished.
- "Finish projects on schedule" is expected. Instead, establish action plans that will make it happen.
- "Improve the project management process" does not indicate how that will happen. There is no understanding of what will be done.
- "Contribute to improved teamwork" does not lay out how to do it or what needs to be accomplished to make it happen.
- "Contribute to improved internal communications" does not support how it will be accomplished.

Action plans need to be specific and concise. Generalities don't contribute to the success of the company.

ACTION PLAN GUIDELINE NO. 7

Don't establish too many action plans.

While this advice is brief, it's extremely important, so make sure you follow these guidelines. Businesses have a tendency to establish too many action plans, and that leads to problems.

Make sure you and your employees avoid piling on too much. Focus only on important and meaningful action plans. Follow an absolute rule of containing action plans to one page in length. You and your employees can always establish more action plans when the original list is finished.

Several years ago, a supervising manager had a relatively young project manager who had some great plans. The trouble was, the project manager's plans were too big and too inclusive, and required several pages of action plans—most of them good.

Rather than editing down the list of action plans to one page, the manager let the person set out to accomplish everything. The young project manager didn't know where to start, became totally overwhelmed and accomplished very little.

What would have happened had the manager insisted the action plans not exceed one page? It's fairly safe to predict that much more would have been accomplished.

Learn from this mistake and keep action plans to a one page! +



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COMMERCIAL AND MULTIFAMILY SECTORS MAKE SOLID GAINS IN 2022

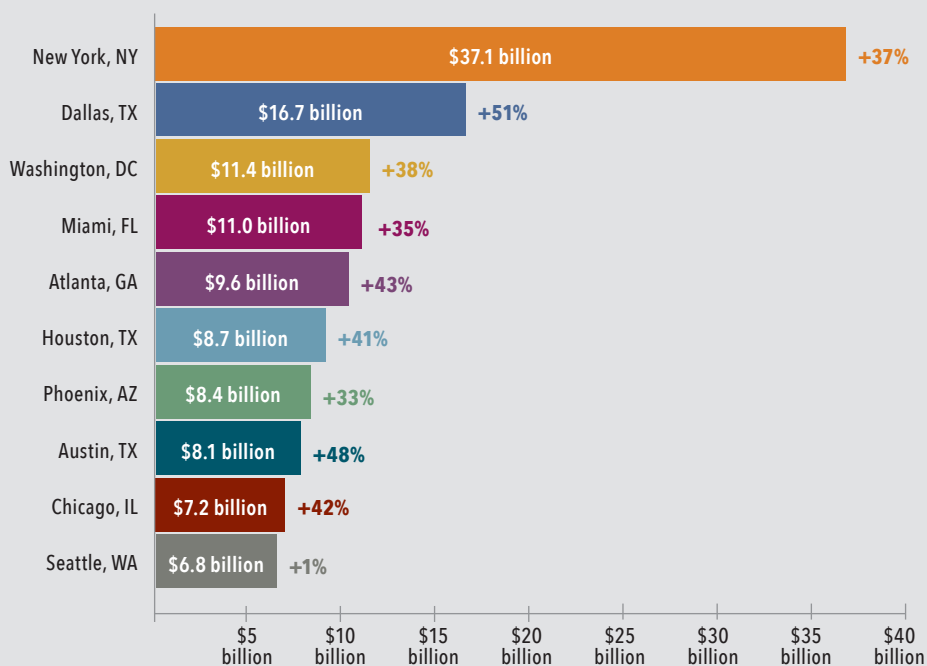
IN 2022, THE VALUE OF COMMERCIAL AND MULTIFAMILY CONSTRUCTION STARTS IN THE TOP 10 METROPOLITAN AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES INCREASED 37% FROM 2021, ACCORDING TO DODGE CONSTRUCTION NETWORK. NATIONALLY, COMMERCIAL AND MULTIFAMILY CONSTRUCTION STARTS INCREASED 25%.

These sectors were largely driven by rising demand for apartments and condos. Commercial starts also posted strong gains fueled by increased demand for hotel, data center and retail projects.

The top 10 metropolitan areas in 2022 according to dollars invested in construction starts (plus rates of growth) are shown in the chart to the right. These top 10 areas accounted for 40% of all commercial and multifamily starts in the United States, up from 37% in 2021.

"The year 2022 will go down as a banner year for construction starts," said Richard Branch, Chief Economist for Dodge Construction Network. "Even when adjusted for inflation, commercial and multifamily starts were impressive as construction activity began to move back towards downtown urban cores. This pace of activity, however, is unlikely to be sustained in 2023 as the economy is slated to slow and approach stall speed. Commercial and multifamily construction starts are likely to take this on the chin and post declines for the year."

2022 TOP 10 U.S. METROPOLITAN AREAS FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS AND MULTIFAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION STARTS



Source: Dodge Construction Network

AD INDEX

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THE DOORS OF SPAIN



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DOORS, WINDOWS, STEPS, METAL GRATES—I LOVE THEM ALL. I’M DRAWN TO THE TEXTURES, THE ANGLES AND THE COLORS. EXPOSED BRICK? I’M YOUR GIRL. GRITTY DETAILS? THEY SPEAK OF LIFE. INTERESTING INTERSECTIONS OF OLD AND NEW? MORE PLEASE.

A recent trip to Spain made me appreciate the art of fenestration in all its glory. Windows, shutters, arched doors, doors within doors and metalwork. The close and twisting alleys of the old cities keep the blazing sun to a minimum, casting shifting shadows throughout the day.

To further keep the sun at bay, the locals hang sheets down from outer doors until they catch on the far side of a balcony railing, where they add to the artful facade. At night, when the shop doors are closed, down come the rippled metal garage doors, decorated with intentional designs and gifted graffiti as shown in my photo to the left.

Hostal Dragonfly exemplified the beautiful arched doors hiding smaller rectangular entry doors found throughout Barcelona. Undoubtedly, back in the day, it was an old mansion with a center courtyard; horse and carriage would go through the large

door, through the house and into the yard. I love the intersection of the ironwork in the transom windows with the jarring house buzzers on the side—old and new together, as shown in the center below.

It was in the old hill city of Toledo that I found my favorite door, as shown at the right below. It was on a simple strip of shops close to the glorious train station. Locked and looking lonely, this door spoke of the many people that had crossed its threshold to get a haircut, buy a pastry or purchase a new phone. The faded red paint next to the chipping bricks highlighted the lovely window grail and the low center doorknobs on the well-used doorway. The nasty lock speaks of modernity.

There is so much more, but the other doors of Spain are left for you to discover. +

Hanging sheets in Barcelona.



Hostal Dragonfly entrance doors.



A weathered door in Toledo.





Photo by Julia Volk



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