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President's Message

Make Sure That Prospective Client Is A Good Fit

I got a couple of phone calls last month from prospective clients. (I suspect as the economy has picked up pace that your phone has been ringing more frequently as well.) Both of these calls stood out to me as examples of how we need to make sure the clients we pursue and engage are a good fit for our land surveying organizations. (In this message I refer to land surveying organizations, but the principles apply to many engineering organizations as well.) Let me tell you a bit about both phone calls. Then consider if the potential clients on the phone would have been good fits for your organization.

The first call came from a young lady worked as a real estate agent. She informed me that she needed an elevation certificate. She told me that she only had a budget of \$300 and she needed the elevation certificate completed the very next morning for a deal that needed to close the afternoon the same day as the survey. She was frustrated that none of the other land surveyors she had left messages for had called her back.

The second call was from a general contractor in Arizona. He was calling to follow-up on a "request for bid" that his company had sent to my office a couple of weeks before. The bid was for the work to provide construction staking for a new bank being built in Santa Cruz, California. I patiently explained that my company was located almost a 3 hour drive from Santa Cruz and that I wasn't going to be the cheapest surveyor he would to perform this work. He responded to my explanation by saying: "So you are telling me you don't want to give us a bid?"

Both of these phone calls were short. They lasted no more than 5 minutes. Yet in that

Calendar of Events

Meetings are at the Hilton Sacramento Arden West unless otherwise noted.

Please note price increase:

Member Cost: \$40 - Non-Member \$55

Wednesday, April 18th, 2018

General Membership and BOD "Dinner" Meeting

Hilton Sacramento Arden West

Speaker:

Kelly Garman, ACEC-CA Director of Government Affairs

[Register Here](#)

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

Legislative Visit Day

Citizens Hotel, State Capitol

[Register Here](#)

Wednesday, May 9th, 2018

State Board of Directors Meeting

Citizen Hotel, Metropolitan Terrace

(Breakfast available at 7:30 AM, with the meeting ending at 12:00 Noon)

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

General Membership and BOD "Lunch" Meeting

Hilton Sacramento Arden West

Guest Speaker:

TBA



Landon Blake

Sierra Chapter President
2017-2018

Kelly Garman, Director of Government Affairs, ACEC-CA —April 18th Speaker

By Landon Blake, President



Kelly Garman, the Director of Government Affairs for ACEC California, will be our guest speaker for the April 18th Meeting. Kelly will be coming to speak to us about legislative issues ACEC is watching in Califor-

nia during 2018 and will help prepare our members for talking points on Legislative Visit Day in May. Her topics will include SB 920 (LLP Renewal), SB 1804 (CEQA Streamlining) and AB 2648 (Statute of Limitations Exemption for Water Contamination). She will also provide a brief update on the SB 496 (Duty-to-Defend) advisory letter.

Legislative Brief

SB 496 Advisory Letter

Since early 2014, ACEC California worked tirelessly toward a compromise legislative solution that adequately and appropriately addressed the uninsurable risk pushed onto design professionals associated with the duty to defend.

In 2016, ACEC California led a coalition of other statewide design professional organizations (American Institute of Architects, California Council; California Council, American Society of Landscape Architects; California Geotechnical Engineering Association; Structural Engineers Association of California) to educate the legislature and advance duty to defend reform.

Signed into law by Governor Brown in April 2017, SB 496 limits responsibility of a design professional to pay for the cost of defending lawsuits against an indemnitee to the degree that the design professional is at fault. It does not mean that a design professional can avoid the Duty to Defend when they are responsible for a problem, and nothing in this bill limits the design professional's obligation to defend itself when sued. To read and download our most recent communication, please [click here](#).

Joint ACEC/ Calmentor March 2018—Meeting Recap

By Landon Blake, President

Our March meeting was a joint event hosted with Calmentor North Region. We had a panel discussion on the impacts of transportation funding from Senate Bill 1. The panel members included representatives Carl Dreher, Caltrans; Lucinda Wilcox, City of Sacramento and Dan Shoeman, Sacramento County. The panel members discussed a variety of upcoming transportation projects funded in part with money

from Senate Bill 1. They also described the impact Senate Bill 1 funding would have on the backlog of road maintenance and infrastructure investment in the Sacramento Region. At the end of the meeting, the panel answered questions from the audience about upcoming projects and the way agencies planned to utilize Senate Bill 1 funding in the Spring and Summer of 2018.

Register for ACEC Legislative Visit Day: May 8, 2018

By Marco Palilla, State Director



Our annual Legislative Visit Day is Tuesday, May 8th. This is our annual opportunity to meet with state legislators (Assembly and Senate) and promote our consulting engineer and land surveying agenda. An overview of the day's activities is below:

- 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM Opening Presentation & Issues Breakfast
The Citizen Hotel
Metropolitan Terrace
- 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM Capitol Appointments
State Capitol
- 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM 1-hour Legislative Training Session: 1st and 2nd time attendees
The Citizen Hotel – Metropolitan Terrace
- 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Legislative Luncheon
The Citizen Hotel
Metropolitan Terrace
- 1:30 PM - 4:45 PM Capitol Appointments
State Capitol
- 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM 1-hour Legislative Training Session: 1st and 2nd time attendees
The Citizen Hotel – Metropolitan Terrace
- 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Legislative Reception
Brasserie Capitale

If you have not already registered for this important event, please do so at this link:

<https://acec-ca.site-ym.com/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=990883&group>

See you at the Capitol!



Presidents Message Continued.

Continued from page 1

short period of time I learned a great deal about these 2 potential clients, and quickly identified that neither were a good fit for my land surveying organization. What client characteristics did you glean from my description of the phone calls?

Let's think about what we learned from the phone call with the real estate agent that indicates she was a poor choice of a client for my land surveying organization:

1. She was trying to obtain a survey the night before her survey. This indicated she was very inexperienced or was very bad at her job. In either case, it meant she was disorganized and not a good planner.
2. She already had a set price for the cost of the elevation certificate, which she obviously hadn't gotten from a surveyor working after the arrival of the steam engine. This indicated she was using bad information that she hadn't verified.
3. She had no idea how long it took, or how much it might reasonably cost, to perform an elevation certificate. She also had no idea how this cost could vary parcel to parcel. Both of these factors meant she had no appreciation for the value a land surveyor brought to this part of a real estate transaction, and no concern for the quality of the survey product she received.
4. Our real estate agent wasn't the one paying for the survey, and was clearly viewing the need for a survey as an obstacle she needed to remove so she could check a box on one of her forms, close her deal, and collect her commission.

Let's think about what we learned from the phone call with the contractor that indicates he was a poor choice of a client for my land surveying organization:

1. He was calling from Arizona for a job in Santa Cruz, California. I'm not sure what this company was doing on a pursuit on work so far from home, but it indicated that they were likely competing at a disadvantage because of travel costs, didn't likely have strong relationships in the local

community, and probably weren't worried about their long term reputation among the local business community.

2. He didn't know how far it was from Santa Cruz to my office Manteca, or he didn't care. This likely meant he had sprayed out a "bid" from every surveyor within 300 miles of the project location. This indicated he didn't care about quality or local relationships, he only cared about one thing: finding the lowest price. (I'll note he didn't ask at all about my scope-of-services or ability to perform the work. He was only worried about my fee.)

This contractor had no desire to learn about me or about my company. He had no desire in building a long-term business partnership. In his mind, one land surveyor was like any other. He probably spent more time deciding where to eat lunch that day than he did in choosing the professional that would provide important services on his project.

I don't regret passing on these two people as clients. It puzzles me that I get these calls in the first place. That wouldn't happen if other land surveyors weren't taking these people on as clients. Perhaps people like this are a good fit for other land surveying organizations. It is more likely that they are a poor fit for every land surveying organization, and that land surveyors aren't skilled enough at business to recognize this.

It is amazing what you can learn in 3 minutes on a phone call with a potential client. Be on the look out for words like "bid" and "tomorrow". They are signs of trouble. Think about who you want to work for, and what type of clients are a good fit. Teach your business development staff to do the same thing. Work for people you know, or people from your local community that care about their reputation and the quality of the services they provide. Take care of business partners that want more than a one-night-stand.

Landon Blake
ACEC-CA Sierra Chapter
President 2017-2018

ACEC-CA Sierra Chapter Member Profile



GeoEngineers—Earth Science and Engineering Experts

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GeoEngineers is an employee-owned consulting firm, established in 1980, that uses earth science and engineering to improve our communities and protect our world. You'll find us where soil meets foundation, water meets land, and humanity meets environment.

Navigating the boundary between natural and built environments is complicated, and so are the challenges our clients face. Our interdisciplinary team of earth science and engineering experts work to see the project from our clients' point of view and identify potential problems before they arise. We start with a foundation of reliable data, look for creative ways to reduce both costs and risks, and then guide our clients toward success.

At GeoEngineers, people come first. Our foundational principles of integrity, client service, and quality work have propelled GeoEngineers' growth from a small consulting partnership in the Seattle area to a multidisciplinary team of more than 300 people in 14 offices nationwide.

Geoengineers works on a broad spectrum of geotechnical and environmental projects in a variety of markets. Here's just a taste of some of GeoEngineers' projects along the West Coast:



(Left) GeoEngineers developed an overall site cleanup strategy to manage and reduce environmental risk at the Gates Foundation's Seattle campus. Our environmental team monitored cleanup, including segregating and removing approximately 620,000 tons of contaminated soil. (Winner of ACEC Washington Engineering Excellence Gold Award.)

(Right) GeoEngineers worked with the Kiewit-General-Manson (KGM) Joint Venture design-build team on the construction of the I-520 Floating Bridge over Lake Washington—the largest floating bridge in the world. Our team provided geotechnical consulting, design and construction support for the eastern bridge landing near Evergreen Point Road. (Winner of ACEC's Grand Conceptor award.)



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GET NOTICED IN THE SIERRA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER!

Would you like to see YOUR FIRM listed in this Newsletter?

ACEC-CA/Sierra Chapter firms in good standing are invited to submit a company profile for inclusion in this newsletter. **Firms that have not been featured in the last two years are invited to participate again.**

Contact Kathy Wickam, Vice President.



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ACEC California Sierra Chapter

April 2018

You are cordially invited to attend:

General Membership and BOD “Dinner” Meeting **Wednesday April 18, 2018**

Guest Speaker:

Kelly Garman

Director of Government Affairs
American Council of Engineering Companies, California

Topic of Discussion:
Legislative Visit Day Talking Points

On-line Registration/ RSVP:

[Register Here](#)

Or you can:

***Pay by check at the door.**

***Pay Cash at the door.**

**R.S.V.P. deadline: Monday
April 16th, 12:00 noon**

*If paying by cash or check at the door, please either “RSVP Only” at the above Eventbrite link, or email dlocicero@acec-ca-sierra.org for reserving your seat.



Meetings are held at the Hilton unless otherwise noted.

Hilton Sacramento Arden West
220 Harvard Street
Sacramento, CA

5:00pm - 6:00pm: BOD Meeting

6:00pm - 6:30pm: Networking

6:30pm - 9:00pm: General Membership
Dinner Meeting