AI: How It Will Benefit The Construction Sector

It's no secret that the construction industry lacks technological advancement while most other industries are taking full advantage of it. According to Constructible, the industry has only grown about 1 percent per year over the course of the last several decades, while manufacturing has grown 3.6 percent and the entire world economy by 2.8 percent. It's also infamous for its poor planning and budgeting, miscalculations, and cost overruns. New and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) will help the industry overcome challenges, keep up with the global economy, and improve construction sites.

Here are ways the construction sector will benefit from artificial intelligence:

Safer Jobsites

Construction sites are one of the most unsafe environments. In fact, according to OSHA, one in five worker deaths in 2017 were in construction. Accidents happen for a variety of reasons but wearing the proper equipment at all times is the best place to start preventing injury from occurring. A 2010 survey conducted by the American Society of Safety Engineers found that 98% of respondents noticed workers not wearing proper safety equipment when they should have been. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a mandatory standard across the board on most construction sites. Thanks to the latest technology, companies can better protect their workers than ever before.

Technology such as wearables and image recognition software are helping to create safer jobsites. Wearables such as safety vests, hard hats, and “smart clothing” are being created by a New York-based company called Human Condition that are designed to help prevent jobsite injuries and fatalities. Safety vests and hard hats are integrated with computers, sensors, GPS capabilities, and real-time locating systems, allowing data to be gathered from the devices in real-time so site supervisors can monitor workers at all times. According to Construct Connect, “the safety vest includes an airbag collar that would inflate should a worker fall and would monitor vital signs and repetitive motions”, while

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Meet & Greet

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Is faulty workmanship covered by your Commercial General Liability policy?

You carry a Commercial General Liability policy to insulate your company against a wide variety of risk exposures. But chances are pretty strong that there's a significant gap – and a significant exposure for you – in that coverage.

The issue revolves around faulty workmanship by subcontractors and whether such situations are covered by a CGL policy. More specifically, the question is whether an error by a sub constitutes an “occurrence” as defined in the policy. The answer not only varies from state to state based on prior court decisions, but appears to be generally in flux as courts and legislators revisit the issue.

While the trend in recent years seems to be towards the idea that faulty workmanship constitutes an occurrence and thus is covered under a CGL, the majority view, and the view in Maryland, is that it does not. Insurers hold that any damages as a result of a failure to perform under contract are not unexpected and therefore do not qualify. Further, say insurers, holding CGL policies responsible for such errors forces the policy to do the work of a warranty or performance bond.

Predictably, insureds tend towards the opposite view: unexpected consequences of faulty workmanship are indeed accidental and should be covered under the CGL policy.

As noted, the issue has led to a huge number of court cases, with results varying from state to state. In some states, legislators have taken matters into their own hands, passing laws that deem construction defects to be occurrences under CGL policies.

But not in Maryland. Here, the current law of the land dates to 1998 and Lerner Corp. vs. Assurance Co. of America, an Appellate Court decision in which the court refused to recognize that coverage is triggered by faulty workmanship.

Maryland’s Circuit Court followed suit in a pair of 2015 decisions holding that faulty workmanship does not constitute an “accident” or “occurrence,” with limited exceptions such as an injury due to that workmanship.

Where does that leave your company? With a potentially large gap in your coverage. While the Maryland courts define an “occurrence” somewhat differently than a standard policy, they agree that faulty workmanship by your subcontractors does not make the cut.

The good news is that there may be a solution in the form of a clarifying endorsement to the CGL policy. The endorsement is not typically included in a standard CGL policy, so having a broker who understands the issue – and your exposure to it – is vital.

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Josh Marvel is a Commercial Risk Advisor with Consolidated Insurance + Risk Management based in Owings Mills, Maryland. Armed with a unique background that started as a commercial insurance underwriter, Josh began his career as a Risk Advisor with Consolidated in 2008. Drawing off of his experience, Josh proudly works with clients to align their corporate and risk management goals in a way that will stand out to the insurance marketplace. Josh specializes in Business, Strategic, and Hazard risk identification and planning, as well as Experience Mod. Rating management, reputation management, and insurance contract reviews. Josh has earned the Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC), Accredited Advisor in Insurance (AAI), and Certified Authority on Worker’s Compensation (CAWC) professional designations. Josh lives in Ellicott City, Maryland with his wife and two sons.
Save Energy By Using Insulating Concrete Forms For Your Walls

The use of high performance exterior wall systems is an integral part of an efficient energy strategy for a building. A high performance exterior wall system generally includes materials that create air and moisture barriers as well as an insulating layer creating a thermal barrier with minimal thermal bridges. While there are numerous exterior wall systems available in the market, the use of Insulating Concrete Forms (ICF) for exterior walls is gaining popularity because of its benefits that exceed expectations for a high performance exterior wall system. In fact, there are two schools in Baltimore City that are being constructed right now using ICF walls as part of the Net Zero Energy strategy for those schools.

What are Insulating Concrete Forms (ICF)? As indicated in Figure 1, the system is comprised of two layers of 2.5 inches (or more) thick Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) foam insulation (creates an R-value of at least 28) for the interior and exterior forms connected by stirrups spaced at 8 inches on center that are situated to create a cavity that ranges from 4 to 12 inches in width. The ICF system is constructed in blocks that may range from 2 feet high (equal to three 8-inch courses) to 4 to 8 feet in length (equal to three to six 16-inch lengths), so that the preformed ICF blocks are manufactured to maintain dimensions similar to CMU block height and length to simplify construction by keeping horizontal and vertical dimensions in multiples of 8 inches.

The cavity is then filled with concrete to provide the structural support for the wall. Reinforcing steel can easily be added to the cavity because the stirrups are constructed to allow for the rebar to snap into place at 8-inch spaces. Therefore there is no need to tie the reinforcing steel as the stirrups provide the support and resist displacement when the concrete is placed inside the ICF forms. The ICF walls need to be lightly braced until the concrete has gained sufficient strength, but then the ICF “stays in place” as there is no need for form removal. The ICF is designed to provide a substrate for installing utilities and for attaching exterior and interior finishes. Attachment points are where the stirrups / furring strips extend to both faces of the foam.

The benefits of ICF exterior walls systems can be summarized in the following list.

- Creates a strong, durable, and safe exterior wall system consisting of reinforced concrete that is resistant to fire and high winds to provide a resilient structure.
- Provides a form for the concrete wall that does not have to be removed, thereby saving materials and labor.
- Results in a high performance exterior wall system that includes thermal, air, moisture, fire and sound barriers.
- Establishes a firm substrate for the attachment of finish materials as well as running utilities in the foam.
- Reduces construction time (less carrying costs), lower worker fatigue (no heavy lifting), easy training for workers, minimal heavy equipment on site (less costs), less waste with efficient design dimensions, insulation allows for concrete placement in most

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The Challenges Of Working In The Nation’s Capital

Contractors working in and around the nation’s capital face a unique set of challenges not often encountered by firms working in other parts of the United States. While certain segments of the construction market may remain more stable because of the never-ending public spending, there are many factors related to the region and its unique types of projects that create sometimes difficult challenges for contractors in the mid-Atlantic. Whether a contractor is pursuing work in the federal sector, on military installations, mission-critical facilities, healthcare, higher-education and even in the commercial sector, this region presents a lot of challenges for many contractors.

Traffic

As anyone who spends time on the roads in the mid-Atlantic can attest, the traffic and congestion on the roads and highways often creates significant, time-wasting delays. Traffic-related delays affect to movement of personnel and equipment and require special attention to prevent adversely affecting project schedules. This is especially true for heavy equipment-intense contractors like DXI Construction who must transport large equipment and bulk materials like stone and soil on our roads. Special DOT permits and vehicle escorts may be necessary and scheduling early-morning or late-evening movements are often required to mitigate delays and prevent causing more traffic problems for the public. Even personnel are affected by the traffic. Many projects are located some distance from the homes and offices of the people working on them. Although a project may only be 20-30 miles from one’s starting point, heavy traffic or an unforeseen incident can result in a 1-2-plus-hour commute. For contractors who regularly work 10-12-hour days, adding an extra hour or two to each end of those long days takes a significant toll on its people.

High security

With the large number of federal agencies and military bases located in the mid-Atlantic there is ample opportunity to secure contracts for projects in these sectors. The federal government footprint in Maryland alone accounts for 20 military facilities, 60 civilian federal agencies and 74 federal labs! However, many of these types of projects may include strict security requirements for the company and its personnel. Some of the requirements DXI has seen recently include, special bonding, NDAs, US-citizenship for all personnel, background checks, heightened safety and low EMR ratings, equipment and personnel scanning and inspections as well as extremely limited site access and access to project documents and drawings. Furthermore, because of the often-sensitive activity at these sites, scheduling with limited working hours can create a significant challenge.

Critical path

Federal and military projects are not the only projects that have strict requirements creating challenges for contractors in this region. Whereas many other regions may enjoy the growth of the technology and e-commerce sectors, the mid-Atlantic remains a hotbed of activity for construction in this sector. However, most of these types of projects, for which DXI Construction has provided turnkey site preparation, have been driven primarily by critical path completion schedule. Whether the project is a 66-acre site that must be cleared, graded, wet and dry utilities installed and a one million square-foot pad built in just a few months or a waterfront, brownfield site with unique geotechnical challenges and legacy, underground infrastructure that must be demolished before installing new utilities and prepping a two million square-foot pad, these projects require a tremendous amount of planning, equipment mobilization and crew allocation to execute on time and on budget. Projects that are driven by very aggressive schedules demand that a contractor be staffed and equipped with enough resources to meet those requirements.

Safety

In an environment fraught with so many hazards and...
Consolidated Insurance + Risk Management Included In IIABA’S Best Practices Study

For the 4th consecutive year, Maryland Construction Network “Industry Partner” Consolidated Insurance + Risk Management has been selected to be part of an elite group of independent insurance agencies participating in the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America (IIABA or the Big “I”) “Best Practices” Study Group.

The Best Practices Study was initiated by the Big “I” in 1993 as the foundation for efforts to improve agency performance. The annual survey and study of leading independent insurance agencies documents the business practices of the highest performing agencies and urges others to adopt similar practices. Each year since 1993, IIABA and Reagan Consulting, an Atlanta-based management consulting firm, join forces to study the United States’ leading agencies in six revenue categories. The study groups agencies are selected every third year through a comprehensive nomination and qualifying process and awarded a “Best Practices Agency” designation. The selected “Best Practices” agencies retain their status during the three-year cycle by submitting extensive financial and operational data for review each year.

In 2019, more than 1,300 independent agencies were nominated to take part in the annual study. Only 267 agencies qualified for the honor. To be chosen, an agency had to be among the top-performing agencies in one of six revenue categories. Consolidated Insurance & Risk Management was nominated by either a Big “I” affiliated state association or an insurance company. Consolidated once again qualified based on its operational excellence.

In keeping with Maryland Construction Network’s commitment to value and excellence, MCN has partnered with Consolidated Insurance; forming an exclusive relationship. The Contractors Select Insurance Program offers MCN member companies a competitive insurance, bonding, and risk management services program featuring many additional benefits. Teaming with Consolidated and MCN to support the program is FCCI Insurance Group, a commercial insurance provider with an appetite for construction, operating in 19 states with regional Underwriting, Claims, and Risk Control support via offices in the Mid-Atlantic region and beyond. For 60 years, FCCI has offered exceptional service, quality and value; backed by financial strength and industry expertise. FCCI is Rated A (Excellent) by A.M. Best.

Dan Workmeister, President at Consolidated, had this to say of the partnership, “Maryland Construction Network and FCCI are the perfect fit. If you follow their stories, it’s clear to see. We have an insurance carrier conceived by a group of local business owners, mostly contractors, to provide organizations with affordable insurance programs to meet their needs. We have an industry association, founded by individuals steeped in the local construction community, committed to working with contractors to overcome their challenges. By working together, MCN and FCCI will be a real asset to the contracting community; helping contractors to reach their objectives.”

For additional information on MCN Industry Partners, Consolidated Insurance & Risk Management, FCCI Insurance Group, or The Contractors Select Insurance Program, click on the links above or call MCN at 443.982.7329 or Consolidated at 410.356.9500.

Insulating Concrete Form (ICF) Installation Training Course

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13 Benefits Of Using A CCTV System On Your Construction Site

You live for the hustle and bustle of the construction site, it is your chosen career, and it can be quite invigorating. However, the very thing that makes your construction site exciting also makes it dangerous.

In addition to being a breeding ground for injury accidents, construction sites are a magnet for theft. In fact, research shows that construction site equipment theft costs between $300 million and a billion dollars each year. If you’re wondering whether to install a CCTV system on your construction site, here’s a rundown on 13 benefits of using this type of system in the construction field. Let’s get started!

1. Supervise Your Construction Workers with a CCTV System

A particularly important advantage of having a CCTV system at your site is its ability to give you a much better view of your employees’ activities. If you’re a project manager, this is invaluable. After all, a construction site is a lot like a beehive. You’re happy to see all of your hard workers going to and from, but this also makes it challenging to account for any and all activities that take place at the site. That’s where CCTV comes in. With a quality system, you can easily buzz through recorded footage of your entire site and thus stay on top of your workers’ work rate levels on a regular basis.

2. Determine How Resources Are Being Used

In addition to keeping a close eye on how hard your employees are working — or not working — CCTV can help you to determine your construction site’s resource usage level. This is invaluable because the amount of activity taking place at your site is usually so high that you can’t account for your resource usage fully. Examples of resources that require monitoring include employee gear, cement and hardware tools, and oh so many other tools and gadgets.

3. Analyze Your Construction Project’s Progress

Another reason to install a CCTV system at your construction site? You can keep a close eye on the site, in general, to effectively respond to any needs that crop up there. For instance, you can learn from your camera footage how your current project is progressing. Will you need additional resources, like skilled labor, to finish the project in the near future? Yes, you’ll still likely need to visit your work site from time to time to observe it in person. But a camera can come in handy as an immensely convenient “personal assistant” when you can’t be there.

4. Prevent Crime

A major hindrance that many construction sites face is having to maintain the site’s security levels, particularly when the area is dormant or when nobody is watching. Unfortunately, a construction site is a prime target for a vandal. Even if vandals may not necessarily want to steal your equipment, they may be interested in destroying it for “fun.” However, CCTV footage can help you to pinpoint the nonsense and any inconsistencies taking place at your site. These cameras can even indicate that a crime is about to happen on site. At the same time, the presence of the cameras themselves may help to deter vandals altogether. Cameras may also prevent theft by disgruntled workers who want to steal spare materials or equipment. And theft can have a huge impact on your bottom line.

5. Aid in a Criminal Case

Let’s say that someone is taken into custody for stealing from your construction site or committing another criminal act there. Your CCTV system’s camera footage may serve as evidence in the criminal case. In fact, it may be the only strong evidence that prosecutors can secure in the case. Having that back up means that you are covered, can successfully win the case, and get the ball rolling again.

6. Aid in a Civil Personal Injury Lawsuit

Just as your CCTV camera may help in a criminal case, it could provide valuable evidence in a civil personal injury lawsuit.
Shrinkage And Curling Of Concrete Slabs On Ground

From ACI 360: “...it is completely normal to expect some amount of shrinkage and curling on every project...”

Curling is caused by Drying Shrinkage as well as by moisture or temperature differences across the thickness of the slab.

The likelihood of Curling increases as the top of the slabs cools or dries out and contracts more than the wetter bottom. Curling occurs as the top of the slab shrinks while the bottom is restrained. Drying Shrinkage is the reduction in concrete volume resulting from a loss of water from the concrete after the initial hardening. Normal concrete shrinks about 5/8 of an inch every 100 feet, or about 1/8 inch every 20 feet.

So, how can we reduce the potential for shrinkage and curling?

Curing – Adequate curing of slab particularly during early ages; followed by adequate measures to further reduce moisture loss from slab surfaces by using breathable coatings, sealers, etc.

Reinforcement – reinforcing steel & wire mesh should be placed in the top 1/3rd of the slab thickness. Steel or wire mesh in the bottom restrains the shrinkage in the bottom while the top shrinks, increasing the possibility of curling at the edges. It can be challenging to keep the reinforcement from falling down as concrete is placed. However it can be done.

Don’t Add Excess Water - Only a set amount of water is needed to hydrate all the Portland cement. Each concrete mix design specifies the maximum amount of water which should not be exceeded. Adding more water to the mix increases the volume prior to hardening, which in turn leads to increased shrinkage as the excess water evaporates. Take precautions to avoid excess bleeding.

Water-Reducing Admixtures - Water-reducing admixtures could be used to lower the water content.

Plasticizers – If a higher slump is needed, use plasticizers instead of additional water.

Aggregate Gradation – Use a coarse aggregate gradation while still maintaining placeability, workability, finishability, and pumpability.

Aggregate Size – Use largest practical maximum aggregate size and/or highest practical coarse aggregate content. Coarser aggregate requires less paste to coat the exposed surface area of aggregate than the equal weight of smaller aggregates. Less paste means less Portland cement, less water, and shrinking and curling.

Contraction Joint Spacing – Contraction joints allow concrete to crack at specified locations to reduce random cracking, which is typically undesirable, that results from shrinkage during curing. Standards such as ACI and PCA provide guidance on the spacing of contraction joints. Good industry practice is to use joint spacing not exceeding 24 times the slab thickness.

Contraction Joint Depth – To be effective, contraction joints should be cut deep enough (often 1/4 to 1/3 the thickness of the slab) so that the joints are weak enough to propagate cracking at the joints.

Low Friction Subgrades – Sometimes it is possible to use low friction materials immediately below the slab that allow the slab to move as the concrete shrinks which can help the slab to stay together between the joints.

Avoid higher than necessary Portland cement content: Use Fly Ash or Slag as partial replacement. Fly ash and slag shrink significantly less than Portland cement.

Steel or Synthetic Fibers - Steel or synthetic fibers in the proper dosage can reduce the likelihood of cracking between contraction joints.

- Use Thicker Slabs or increase the thickness of slab at edges.
- Use a permeable (porous) dry (or almost dry) subbase material.
- Use of Shrinkage-compensating concrete.

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Aggregate Gradation – Use a coarse aggregate
Mechanic’s Liens - Potent But Complicated Remedies

Like most contractors, you have probably heard of mechanic’s liens. If you are lucky, you may never need to use one. However, the unfortunate reality is that construction projects do not always go smoothly. And when projects break down, the mechanic’s lien can be a powerful tool for getting you paid.

So, what are mechanic’s liens? In a nutshell, mechanic’s liens are exactly what they purport to be – liens. Just like mortgages and judgment liens, mechanic’s liens attach themselves to the owner’s buildings and real estate. The holder of a mechanic’s lien can force the sale of the property and can use the proceeds of the sale to pay off the amount owed, just like a bank forecloses on a mortgage. In light of this potent threat, mechanic’s liens typically attract a great deal of attention from various parties to a construction project, including the owners, general contractors, lenders and landlords. And this attention can translate into payment.

It is also important to note that the mechanic’s liens do not eliminate or effect an unpaid contractor’s right to sue under its contract or subcontract. The mechanic’s lien is an extra remedy that can be exercised by a contractor against the owner’s property – even if the unpaid party had no prior relationship with the owner.

However, while mechanic’s liens are powerful, they are also complicated. Following the creation of the first mechanic’s lien by Thomas Jefferson in 1791 (to encourage contractors to engage in construction projects in the District of Columbia) Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia all enacted mechanic’s lien statutes. Despite the fact that these states border one another, their mechanic’s lien laws are very different, and each state has its own nuances and pitfalls.

For example, the methods for filing liens varies depending on the jurisdiction. In the District of Columbia and Virginia, a lien can be filed by recording a document in the land records. By contrast, Maryland lien law requires the filing of a lawsuit and the entry of the lien by a judge. The deadlines for filing liens also vary wildly among the three jurisdictions. In Maryland, a contractor must file its lawsuit to establish a lien within 180 days after last furnishing, or the lien is lost. In Virginia and the District of Columbia, a lawsuit is not required to start the process. However, in Virginia, the lien must be filed within 90 days of the last day of the month that the contractor did work, or within 90 days after the project is terminated, whichever is earlier. In the District of Columbia, a lien must be recorded within 90 days after the project is complete.

Each of the above jurisdictions also has its own nuances for filing liens. For example, in the District of Columbia, subcontractors should know that the land records clerks do not view the “last day of the project” as the last day of the general contractor’s work. The land records clerks interpret this phrase to mean the last day of the unpaid subcontractor’s work. In Maryland, a subcontractor must serve a Notice of Intent to Lien on the owner within 120 days after last furnishing, or the right to file a lien suit is barred. In Virginia, mechanic’s liens cannot contain amounts for labor and materials that were worked more than 150 days prior to their last day of work. The above examples are not exhaustive by any means, and each jurisdiction has many additional pitfalls for the unwary. All of these nuances make mechanic’s liens difficult to obtain. The failure to understand each and every requirement can result in a defective lien, and the loss of relief.

Additionally, the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia vary as to who can file a mechanic’s lien. Generally, the District of Columbia affords lien rights to contractors and subcontractors, while Virginia and Maryland afford lien rights to lower tiered contractors and suppliers as well. Each of the above jurisdictions also differ as to the defenses that can be asserted by an owner. In Virginia and the District of Columbia, a mechanic’s lien will be ineffective against property if the owner of that property pays the general contractor in full without notice of an unpaid subcontractor. In Maryland, a commercial owner can be found liable to subcontractors even if the owner paid the

Continued on Page 24
The Benefits Of Health Insurance

Workers today don’t view benefits as a perk, they’re an expected part of their compensation package. And the crown jewel of any benefits package is health insurance.

Here are the top 3 reasons why you should offer health insurance to your employees:

1. Retain and Attract Qualified Employees

A recent Metlife study found health insurance to be the most important benefit that workers look for when applying for a new job. It’s time to stop thinking of health insurance as a negative cost to your company and start thinking of it as a long-term investment that will pay off ten-fold by acquiring and retaining the kind of top-level talent who will help your company grow.

2. Tax Savings

Contributions that you make to your employees’ health care premiums are considered a business expense, which means you can deduct the cost of those premiums from your federal business taxes. Plus, if you’re working on public projects, the fringe dollars can minimize the impact of medical premiums to your operational bottom line.

And, if you’re a small business, you could qualify for the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit that’s worth up to 50% of your premium costs.

3. Getting Insurance is Easy

The process is A LOT less complicated when you have a dedicated broker who can lead you through the entire process. First, they’ll help you select a plan that’s right for you and your employees. After that, they should set up your plan and keep you compliant. Pretty easy, right?

Sean Gallagher
Marketing Associate
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New Laws
New Tech
New OSHA

Oh S#^@?!

Thursday, October 10th, 2019
Union Jack’s British Pub - Columbia

New laws went into effect on October 1st directly impacting construction companies.

Find out what you need to know from the trusted attorneys of

Learn More!
Confined spaces – such as manholes, crawl spaces, and tanks – are not designed for continuous occupancy. They are difficult to exit in the event of an emergency. People working in confined spaces face life-threatening hazards including toxic substances, electrocutions, explosions, and asphyxiation.

Before work begins at a worksite, each employer must ensure that a competent person identifies all confined spaces in which one or more employees might work. Each space, that is a permit space, is also identified through consideration and evaluation of the elements of that space; including testing as necessary.

An employer whose employees enter a permit space need not comply with certain regulations, provided that certain conditions are met including:

- The employer can demonstrate that all physical hazards in the space are eliminated or isolated through engineering controls so that the only hazard posed by the permit space is an actual or potential hazardous atmosphere.
- The employer can demonstrate that continuous forced air ventilation alone is sufficient to maintain that permit space safe for entry, and that in the event the ventilation system stops working, entrants can exit the space safely.

Additional requirements for confined spaces include:

- Any conditions making it unsafe to remove an entrance cover must be eliminated before the cover is removed.
- When entrance covers are removed, the opening must be immediately guarded by a railing, temporary cover, or other temporary barrier that will prevent an accidental fall through the opening and that will protect each employee working in the space from foreign objects entering the space.
- Before an employee enters the space, the internal atmosphere must be tested, with a calibrated direct-reading instrument, for oxygen content, flammable gases and vapors, and for potential toxic air contaminants; in that order. Any employee who enters the space, or that employee’s authorized representative, must be provided an opportunity to observe the pre-entry testing, including forced-air ventilation.
- The atmosphere within the space must be continuously monitored unless the entry employer can demonstrate that equipment for continuous monitoring is not commercially available or periodic monitoring is sufficient. If continuous monitoring is used, the employer must ensure that the monitoring equipment has an alarm that will notify all entrants if a specified atmospheric threshold is achieved, or that an employee will check the monitor with sufficient frequency to ensure that entrants have adequate time to escape.
- If continuous monitoring is not used, periodic monitoring is required. All monitoring must ensure that the continuous forced air ventilation is preventing the accumulation of a hazardous atmosphere.
- If a hazard is detected during entry, every employee must leave the space immediately and the space must be evaluated to determine how the hazard developed as well as measure to clear the hazard.
- If a hoisting system is used, it must be designed and manufactured for personnel hoisting; however, a job-made hoisting system is permissible if it is approved for personnel hoisting by a registered professional engineer.
Why An Overloaded Inbox Can Hurt Your Effectiveness On The Job And What To Do Instead

Two opposing arguments exist for managing the email Inbox: let email accumulate or get it out of the Inbox.

For those who want to keep email in the Inbox and use searches to find what they need, it's important to understand why having MORE emails in your email Inbox makes you LESS efficient, LESS effective and LESS productive, and how “Inbox: Zero” will help you make more progress faster and easier.

The point of processing all of your email out of the Inbox is NOT to simply say you're at zero. Being at zero is a temporary state anyway. What matters MOST to your overall effectiveness on the job is what you DO with the information and how you manage it after the point of receipt.

The email you receive every day is no different than the mail you receive in your mailbox at home. Regardless of quantity, the point of processing mail is NOT to simply get the mail off the kitchen counter. If that were the case, you could just toss it or hide it in a cabinet.

But that doesn't serve you. That doesn't help you stay up to date with commitments or store necessary reference information or take other important action steps at home. If you DON’T process the mail at home quickly and effectively, you could end up with a lot of unpaid bills, lost letters, missed communications, late fees, lost invitations, missed events, neglected news, and more unfavorable outcomes.

At work, the point of getting to zero in the Inbox is to gain clarity of information and tasks, be more prepared, execute tasks and follow-ups with speed and agility, be more responsive, have more confidence that nothing has been missed, prioritize accurately, have more time, be more proactive, and have more control of HOW you use your time.

All of these benefits (and more) that are derived from learning how to process and manage email more productively support high efficiency and effectiveness on the job.

Why an Overloaded Inbox Wastes Your Time and Works against You

Consider the content of the emails you receive each day. Some emails are related to current tasks, follow-ups and projects or they generate NEW ones. Other emails contain interesting reading, meeting minutes, questions from others, tasks to delegate, announcements to know, invitations to events, attachments to save and ideas to pursue. Many emails require a reply or forwarding, and others belong in Junk or Trash.

To be most efficient and effective in your workday, all of the information you receive from email needs a DECISION from you and the information must GO somewhere ELSE in order to be stored or managed optimally.

These are the challenges people face: decision making and having places to put things. Working without these two things creates two BIG gaps in the email process that poke holes in your overall effectiveness on the job.

While there are many professionals who would love to know how to get emails out of the Inbox, there are others who want to keep it all in the Inbox and mistakenly believe you can stay on top of things that way.

But you can't.

The Inbox is simply a tool for bringing emails in, and HUGE amounts of time, energy and effort are wasted unnecessarily when trying to manage hundreds or thousands of emails in the Inbox. It can't be done efficiently or effectively—and without missing, losing or forgetting important tasks or information.

As a result, attachments and contact information are not easily found. Tasks and follow-ups are not well-managed or accomplished. And the emails themselves can be easily be forgotten as they accumulate and scroll off the screen.

Continued on Page 25
A happy couple was enjoying their wedding with their family and friends when disaster struck. The couple hired a wedding photographer to record the wedding and reception. In the course of performing his services at the wedding, the photographer used a drone to take pictures and record video. The drone accidentally hit one of the wedding guests causing the guest to lose her eye. A claim was made against the wedding photographer’s commercial general liability (CGL) insurance policy. However, the insurance company denied the claim asserting that the claim was excluded under the aircraft exclusion provision in the policy.

Eventually, the injured wedding guest filed suit against the photographer asserting negligence and the photographer sought a defense under his CGL policy. The insurance company initially provided a defense under a reservation of rights, but then filed a declaratory judgment action asking the court to declare that the insurance company was not liable under the policy and that it had no obligation to provide a defense to its insured for the injury caused by the drone.

The court noted that the CGL policy specifically excluded any bodily injury arising out of the use of an “aircraft” operated by an insured. While the policy did not define the term “aircraft,” the court held that the word was unambiguous and its ordinary meaning, as defined by Merriam–Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, is “a vehicle (such as an airplane or balloon) for traveling through the air.”

The court held that the definition of aircraft included a drone. Accordingly, the court granted summary judgment in favor of the insurance company finding that the policy did not cover the claim and that there was no duty to defend the claim. The court even awarded the insurance company the costs of defense it incurred while providing a defense under its reservation of rights.

Drone use is increasingly common, and they can be found in a wide variety of commercial settings, from construction projects, where project contractors or architects use them to monitor the scope and quality of the work, to farms, where drones help farmers check the progress of their crops or to spray them with pesticides. With increasing use comes increasing risk of personal injury or property damage. And, because CGL policies will often exclude coverage for drone-caused damages, it is important that you contact your insurance agent about coverage and determine whether an endorsement to an existing policy or a specialty policy is required to cover your drone related activities.

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Success in the construction industry is largely earned by the application of verified facts gained through understanding truths from the sciences of physics, mathematics, business, finance and others. Most of the time things work best when scientific rules are applied and it makes sense. Construction leaders are well trained in these skills, but what about when something absolutely senseless happens?

Suicide breaks all the rules. It makes no sense.

When shaken by such an event, people rush to make sense of it. People impacted by trauma predictably tend to regress to more basic, primitive impulses and defenses; immediately attempt to make sense of the incident in effort to gain a feeling of control over it; and isolate from others.

This level of reasoning immediately searches for a “bad guy” who caused the tragedy and grasps at the one thing that could have caused such a shocking decision. Projection of blame and allegations need not be accurate to be powerfully destructive. Sometimes this blaming leads to conflict, shame, violence or even another death by suicide.

Also common is the dynamic in which those close to the deceased point the finger of blame squarely at themselves:

- What did I miss?
- I must be an awful friend or colleague for him to be able to do that.
- Did I put too much pressure on her?

Resist the rush to blame. Whereas there may have been a precipitating event, in reality death by suicide usually involves a multitude of factors. Rather than assign blame, a more productive life-giving approach is to provide prompt “postvention” support for those impacted by the death and to educate people regarding suicide prevention.

Postvention support may be available through the company’s Employee Assistance Program that can deploy specially trained behavioral health professionals to consult with leadership, help script messaging, lead group and individual discussions regarding the death, and assess/triage employees who may be at risk for suicide themselves and need additional support.

Effective postvention can serve as prevention.

**WARNING SIGNS**

The No. 1 risk factor for suicide is a previous suicide attempt. The following DANGER signs can help identify a person who might be at risk for suicide.

**D – Depression**

More than half of the time, a suicidal person is experiencing depression. Risk increases when that depression is accompanied by anxiety and even further when alcohol/drug misuse is present. Clinical depression is a serious medical illness affecting mood, concentration, activity level, interests, appetite, behavior and physical health. The most common of these symptoms include:

- feeling sad or empty;
- having little interest or pleasure in doing things;
- experiencing a change in appetite with unintentional weight loss or weight gain;
- trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much;
- being tired, fatigued and having no energy;
- feeling worthless or guilty and that one has let themselves or their family down;
- having difficulty thinking or concentrating;

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Lead By Example As Manager

Becoming a good leader isn’t something that happens overnight. It takes time, dedication and consistent effort to earn you the respect and trust of everyone you work with. One of the best ways to show your team you are in charge is to lead by example, a phrase that’s tossed around frequently but rarely acted upon. Leading by example isn’t always easy, but it is the best way to inspire, motivate and earn the respect of those around you. While there is no set list of ways to lead by example, we can offer a few suggestions for where to start. For example, You want the phone calls return promptly in less the 24 hours. If you do not do it why should anyone else in your organization.

Stay Involved With The Dirty Work

It’s easy for those at the top of the ladder to forget the importance of the ground; as a leader, you must continue to have a working knowledge of the work your company does from the bottom up. There’s no need for you to be the best on the team, but having an in-depth understanding of the work you’re doing and the industry as a whole is essential. Not only will you have a better understanding of what your employees are going through, but you’ll have an easier time earning their trust if they see you getting your hands dirty too.

Watch Your Words

As a manager, your words have a direct impact on the morale of those around you. It’s important to be mindful of who you’re speaking to, what you’re saying, and who might be listening. Criticism and guidance should be done in private, and negative speech should be kept to a minimum if used at all.

Respect The Command Chain

When you have access to the top layers fan organization, it’s easy to forget that command chains are essential. If a problem arises, it’s important to take it to the correct layer of command. This will help alleviate confusion and reinforce the leadership. After all, if those at the top don’t respect the chain of command, why should anyone?

Keep Open Ears

If your team is working successfully, they may have insight and feedback that you can’t afford to ignore. A strong leader will recognize that they don’t know everything and listen to the input from their team.

Ditch Micromanaging

Micromanaging is a sin that most leaders commit. If you’ve adequately communicated the vision, values, and mission of your company, your team should be left to innovate. Not only will you be better able to focus on your own duties, but you will allow your team to feel more responsible and engaged.

Accept Responsibility & Stay Humble

Mistakes happen, and when they do, it’s important to remember that as a manager you must take responsibility. Regardless of who made a mistake, it is the leader’s responsibility to fix the problem. Likewise, you must remember that as the person at the top you must also celebrate the successes of your team. Staying humble and celebrating your employee’s achievements rather than simply applauding yourself will go a long way toward making employees feel appreciated, respected, and vital to the success of your business.

Ready for your AHA! Moment? Call Allan Hirsh Advisors today!

At Allan Hirsh Advisors we believe in making a difference in the lives of CEOs and Business Owners. We help you understand your vision – both personal and professional, discover why you are in business, work with your visions to align them with your “why”, and give you feedback on what is important and hold you accountable for your decisions. All this so you can improve your life and improve the lives of the people around you. If you are interested in taking your business to the next level then contact Allan Hirsh Advisors to learn how we can Create AHA! Moments for you.

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Preserving Your Evidence Can Be "Key Element" In Business Defamation Suit Success

There are some preliminary steps you should take if you believe your business has fallen victim to a defamatory online statement. If, after taking those actions, you still believe your only recourse is to file suit, then you need to take steps to preserve any evidence of the defamation.

It is important to recognize that your social media and other webpages may overwrite posts including the defamatory comments and any responses to those comments. Therefore as a critical first step, screenshot any messages you believe are important, ideally with a reference to the date and time of the post included in the shot. Phones and tablets, generally, do not overwrite photos.

Second, you should immediately stop deleting any data or disposing of any documents. It is very easy to say do not destroy evidence, but actually implementing a plan to preserve the evidence is far more difficult than it may initially seem. Years ago, an evidence preservation plan was as simple as telling people don't throw anything away. Now with the ubiquity of electronic devices and data, compounded by the number of employees, preservation has become far more difficult. Depending on the potential dollar value of your potential lawsuit, it may be advisable to have a mirror copy of all of your data made by a professional data forensics firm. Engaging a data forensics firm can get expensive quickly, but it is a prudent step to ensure that data is preserved.

If any evidence is altered or destroyed a court can issue sanctions. As with so many political investigations it is often the cover up and not the crime that lands someone in trouble. Unexplained and intentional destruction of evidence gives rise to an inference that the evidence would have been unfavorable to their cause. Even if there is no evidence of fraudulent intent a Court could enter an adverse presumption against you if data is missing.

The bottom line is if you believe you will need to engage in a legal battle in response to a defamatory statement, you must do everything you can to make sure that your evidence is preserved. It is also highly recommended that you contact an attorney experienced in handling business defamation matters to assist with evaluating the potential value of your case, likelihood of success and specific evidence needed to prevail.

Aidan Smith, Esquire
PK Law

Aidan Smith is an AV rated trial attorney who has represented individuals and businesses of all sizes in state and federal courts and before arbitration panels throughout the State of Maryland. He practices in the areas of commercial litigation, real estate litigation, general civil litigation, criminal defense and family law. He can be reached at 410-339-6764 or asmith@pklaw.com.

Maryland Construction Network’s New Member Breakfast

November 12th
Consolidated Insurance Office
Owings Mills

An “Invitation Only” event for new members, maximizing their return from MCN membership.

Questions?
Contact Verna at 443.982.7329.
Did You Know?


Construction compliance in or near areas that may or may not look like water has changed again. Do you know how?

Most of the regulated public (understandably) remains confused.

In case you missed the previous event, or to learn more about “How Changing Water Regulations (Still) Continue to Affect Your Project at the Site Level”, click here.

Andrew Der is Principal of Andrew T. Der & Associates, LLC practicing in the consulting industry regionally and nationally since 2001, previously completing 18 years of service at the Maryland Department of the Environment. He specializes in natural resource and water compliance, regulation, permitting, environmental assessment, feasibility studies and advocacy. He is an Academy of Board Certified Environmental Professionals Certified Environmental Professional and also teaches seminars, publishes industry-related articles, an industry representative of advisory committees and provides expert testimony. He can be reached at 410-491-2808 or AndrewTDer@comcast.net.
the hard hat is equipped with LEDs to serve as a work light and a safety feature. Additionally, the company is developing “smart clothing” that will monitor workers’ vital signs, track their movements, determine if they are under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, and if they are suffering from fatigue. These wearables will greatly improve jobsite safety and help supervisors to better monitor their workers’ conditions to make sure they’re working in a safe manner. Another tool that will help to better jobsite safety is an image recognition software developed by Smatvid.io. The AI engine, Very Intelligent Neural Network for Insight & Evaluation, or VINNIE is trained to identify if workers are wearing proper PPE and alert supervisors when someone is improperly dressed. This advanced technology will help supervisors monitor jobsites for safety in real-time, allowing issues to be addressed before an accident occurs.

Increased Productivity

With advanced AI technology, construction jobsites will see a drastic increase in productivity and efficiency. Autonomous construction equipment, or self-operating construction machinery, is being used to perform repetitive tasks such as pouring concrete, excavating, demolition, and bricklaying. The autonomous machines are equipped with 3D mapping, cameras, GPS capabilities, and sensors that provide real-time data for the AI to be able to tell the machines where to go and what to do. Real-time monitoring of the equipment ensures the projects are being completed accurately and efficiently.

Additionally, with the growing threat of worker shortages within the industry, AI will help to alleviate the skilled workforce that exists. According to the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) and Autodesk, “80 percent of construction firms report they are having a hard time filling hourly craft positions”. Albeit implementing self-operating construction machinery is a hefty investment, doing so allows human workers to focus their efforts on the actual construction project, helping to reduce the time it takes to complete a project.

Improved Planning & Scheduling

One area where construction firms can always use more assistance is planning and scheduling. In order to deliver projects on-time and within budget, scheduling needs to be on-top of the ball so when unexpected problems arise, contingency plans are ready to go, and schedules can be adjusted accordingly. This can be a daunting, time-consuming task, but an area where AI will shine.

AI-enabled scheduling assistants help alleviate the stress of scheduling by evaluating millions of existing schedules based on specific parameters and creating the optimal schedule for a project. Project managers can adjust specific criteria such as number of workers, equipment, and building materials, to see how those factors will affect the cost and time frame of a project.

Artificial intelligence within the construction industry can and will be extremely powerful. Implementing AI applications can help to reduce jobsite injuries and fatalities, increase productivity, and enhance project scheduling, ultimately saving construction companies time and money. Companies that embrace and prioritize advanced technology such as AI will reap the benefits in the short and long-term.

Maura McGowan is the Marketing Coordinator at Business Information Group (BIG), a leading IT consulting firm in York, PA. She is a graduate of York College of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing.

Industry Partner Event

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lighter, faster and more cost effective than most other forms of construction, Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs) are quickly becoming the construction method of choice for all forms of construction including single and multi-family homes, hotels, schools, offices – all forms of residential and commercial construction. GC's, Concrete contractors, masons and framers have an opportunity to learn another trade to compete in today’s competitive construction environment. This course will give you the basic training you need to begin building with one of the fastest growing building systems on the market – ICFs.

Since Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs) are quickly becoming the preferred method of construction for many types of buildings, Maryland needs contractors and installers with experience and proper training from an ICF manufacturer. Currently, there are multiple hotels and schools in the area that are being constructed or have recently been constructed using ICF’s and there have been very few, if any, local contractors qualified to bid these projects. This means there is a real demand for contractors who know how to install ICF’s!

Tom Evans
Executive Director
Maryland Ready Mix Concrete Association

To learn more about the importance and relevance of Insulating Concrete Forms (ICFs), contact article author Tom Evans, Executive Director of the Maryland Ready Mix Concrete Association at 301.694.4899. To learn more about MRMCA’s October 24th half-day, hands-on ICF training event in Gambrills click here. Attendees completing training will receive a certificate of completion and a wallet card verifying 4 hours of ICF installation training. In addition, attending Architects will receive 4 AIA LUs. Attending Engineers will receive 4 PDHs.

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CM – BIM, VDC Manager
DPR Construction

Brett Harton
Vice President of Construction
Foulger – Pratt Companies

Jason Lynch
Senior-Level Project Executive
TMG Construction

Shawn Scarlata
Founder / Owner
Mobile Video Guard

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injury lawsuit as well. Of course, you want your work site to remain free from injury accidents. However, it's not a bad idea to remain prepared for the unexpected—life throws us for a wild ride at times. When you capture your site's daily events on camera, you create for yourself a record that may prove helpful in a civil court proceeding. If a member of the public attempts to sue you for reportedly injuring him or her, camera footage has your back.

7. Manage Your Site Remotely

In years past, project managers had to depend on their subordinates unreliable reports to determine what was taking place at their construction sites. Or they had to physically go to the sites to determine what their workers were doing — a task that could have taken hours. Nowadays, though, you can depend on CCTV cameras to watch your site for you— they are your eyes and ears. Being able to manage your site remotely saves you time, energy and money — all of which are valuable resources for any project manager or construction site manager in 2019.

8. Promote Worker Safety

As the manager of a construction site, you’re legally obligated to know exactly who is at the site. You also need to know where everyone is. This is critical in case an emergency happens, which is highly likely at a construction site given its inherently hazardous nature. With CCTV, you can easily monitor your site to see what areas or aspects of it need to be improved to better promote worker safety and thus prevent work site accidents. For instance, camera footage may provide insights into not only work site accidents but also horseplay, dangerous acts and omissions, bullying, disputes, and aggressive behavior. All of this can threaten your worker’s health and safety, which can cost you both financially and reputation-wise in the long run.

9. Record Injury Accidents Involving Workers

No matter how hard you try to prevent injury-causing incidents at the work site (as we discussed in the last point), sometimes accidents are inevitable. Fortunately, a CCTV system can still come in handy in this situation. With such a system, you can review your camera footage frame by frame to analyze a recent injury accident and find out its root cause. Then, you can use this information to support an accident report and even a legal dispute stemming from the work injury. You could also use this information to take disciplinary action, if necessary, as well as make the necessary corrective actions to prevent the incident from occurring again. Another injury-causing issue you may encounter at your construction site is a machinery malfunction. CCTV is perfect for monitoring these types of occurrences. When you thoroughly assess worksite incidents with the help of CCTV, you can drastically reduce the frequency and quantity of on-site accidents.

10. Gain Feedback in Real Time

A major benefit of CCTV is that not only can you review camera footage of your construction site later but also you can view events there in real time. In fact, with a quality system, you can enjoy live monitoring by professionals with law enforcement experience. You could even “talk to” your site using a loudspeaker, which can be helpful and terrifying for talking down suspects who are about to commit crimes at your site. When you can see what's going on at your site at any given moment, you're more likely to spot and stop issues before they turn into major problems.

11. Help with Insurance

By helping to prevent criminal activity, a CCTV system may minimize how much you pay to insure your property. That’s because you’re less likely to be targeted, which means your risk is lower. In addition, if you do fall victim to a burglary, your insurance provider may consider your claim to be more legitimate if you have camera footage to support it.

12. Maintain a Peace of Mind

This is a major benefit of having a CCTV system — one you can't ignore if you're a construction site manager. Camera systems can be particularly useful in areas known to have high rates of crime. However, crime and accidents can happen anywhere and at any time, so it only makes sense to invest in one of these systems wherever you are. The more secure you feel about your workers’ safety and about not losing your costly resources, the better your work-related quality of life will be.

13. Enjoy Around-the-Clock Coverage

You can’t constantly keep an eye on what’s going on at
ACI 302.1R (Guide for Concrete Floor and Slab Construction) serves as an excellent reference document that addresses Curling and Drying Shrinkage subjects in detail. Technical publications by PCA (Portland Cement Association), NRMCA (National Ready-Mix Concrete Association), and other relevant industry entities also offer great insights and valuable guidance on this topic. Concrete design and construction is a real team effort between the structural engineer, the general contractor, the slab subcontractor, the construction materials testing firm, and the ready mix supplier. Pre-pour meetings are very helpful to bring the many factors and roles together to produce quality concrete construction.

We hope this is helpful to your future projects. ECS is a resource to call upon regarding mix design reviews, and concrete testing on your next project.

Charles Gresser, PE is the Vice President of ECS Midwest, LLC in Wisconsin. Mr. Gresser is a licensed professional engineer in California and Wisconsin with over 30 years of progressive professional experience including geotechnical, construction materials and facilities engineering. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from the University of Florida.

Founded in 1988, Engineering Consulting Services (ECS) is a leader in geotechnical engineering, environmental consulting, construction materials testing and facilities engineering. Today, with over 1,700 employees, ECS has grown to more than 60 offices and testing facilities spread across the Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Southeast and Southwest. ECS is currently ranked 72 in Engineering News Record’s (ENR) Top 500 Design Firms and 159 in ENR’s Top 200 Environmental Firms.

Brian A. Loffredo, Esq. is the chair of Offit Kurman, P.A.’s Construction Group. If you have any questions regarding this information, feel free to reach out to him directly at (301) 575-0345 or by email at bloffredo@offitkurman.com.

To master a new technology, you have to play with it.”

~ Jordan Peterson

“As long as you keep going, you’ll keep getting better. And as you get better, you gain more confidence. That alone is success.”

~ Tamara Taylor
And running continuous Searches every time you need something—anything—from your email Inbox is one of the biggest wastes of time and effort you can have in your workday. This is time that could be better spent on accomplishing tasks and follow-ups that really matter to your daily progress.

What Getting to Zero Will Do For You

Getting to zero in the Inbox is a procedure that is made up of several processes occurring in tandem, all of which support the management of your entire workload and your ability to work most efficiently and effectively.

Processing email OUT of the Inbox is…

- A discovery process to build awareness of what you receive and why. An empty Inbox means you’ve seen and reviewed ALL of your emails, which builds confidence that nothing has been missed, lost or forgotten.

- A decision making process to determine what you need and what you DON’T need to have or to do. An empty Inbox means you’ve made decisions about how the information you received is USEFUL to you and you’ve determined the status and urgency of the information or tasks those emails brought to you.

- A placement process to move items you DO need OUT of the Inbox and into the appropriate locations MEANT for managing or storing those items. This means that specific types of information can be found for future reference and tasks can be consolidated and best managed in ONE centralized digital system.

Once you process emails out of your Inbox and into better locations for action or for future reference, you’ll discover an incredible amount of clarity about your commitments, projects and tasks. You’ll know what you owe people and what you’re responsible for in total. Then you can prioritize when to take action on each and every one of your tasks and follow-ups.

You’ll feel increased confidence that all of your important information is where it belongs—in your file drawers, e-files, email folders, Contacts, Calendar or on your Task List. Then—and only then—will you have a new level of control in your workday and understand the significance of Inbox: Zero.

Getting to zero several times a day or at least once a day will give you the power to work more efficiently, effectively and productively. You’ll have the freedom to accelerate achievement and make more meaningful progress with the time you’ve saved. And you can do it all faster and easier… and with a LOT less stress.

**Leslie Shreve**  
**Founder and CEO**  
**Productive Day®**

Leslie Shreve is a workload management and productivity expert and the Founder and CEO of Productive Day®. Leslie is also the creator of Taskology® The Science of Getting Things Done, a simple, logical and easy-to-use system that helps leaders, managers and professionals increase efficiency, effectiveness and productivity by up to 300% while reducing stress by up to 90%. Clients previously frustrated or overwhelmed with too much to do, too many emails and not enough time now claim to have a secret—a new system they can use to take charge of their workday; gain more clarity, confidence and control; and get things done faster and easier—and with a LOT less stress.
Continued from Page 17

- letting personal hygiene go;
- recurring thoughts of hurting one’s self; and
- unexplained physical problems such as backaches, headaches and digestion.

A – Alcohol and Drug Use Increases

Alcohol and drugs may seem like a good way to manage difficult feelings and situations; however, substance use usually acts to mask the underlying problem, which grows worse because it’s not being addressed. Alcohol is a depressant and it reduces judgment and impulse control—a lethal combination for someone who is considering self-harm. More than one-third of the time someone uses alcohol just before attempting suicide.

N – Negativity

People contemplating suicide are feeling overwhelmed and powerless to get better or to change their circumstances. The feeling is often a symptom of a mental health condition (e.g., depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, opioid addiction); a serious or chronic/painful health condition (e.g., cancer, heart disease, Parkinson’s, ALS, etc.); or extremely stressful life events (e.g., death, divorce, job/financial loss, or prolonged exposure to abuse, harassment or bullying).

G – Giving Life Away

Frequently, those with suicidal plans activate a “living will” by allocating cherished objects, positions, activities and relationships to others. In some cases, the person will behave in ways to push loved ones away because they would be “better off without me” and feel this will lessen the pain for their loved one when they are gone.

E – Estrangement

People contemplating suicide often pull away from friends, family and social activities that they normally enjoy. The individual often feels different than others and uncomfortable in groups. Also, the isolation serves as a means to distance him or her from the pain of ultimate separation.

R – Rage and Revenge

Some who are experiencing suicidal thinking exhibit a spectrum of anger-related behaviors, including irritability, a short fuse, ranting or road rage. Suicide risk is elevated when the person expresses anger without regard to consequences to themself and others. In some cases, the person will try to get revenge on others through suicide or a combined homicide-suicide.

When a person is experiencing some or many of these DANGER signs, it is very difficult for them to reach out and ask for help. However, not having anyone notice or reach out to them confirms their worst fears. Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide. Take the risk of asking an uncomfortable question. “I care enough about you to risk ticking you off. Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

Rather than rushing to assign blame, a better strategy is to apply solutions for recovery from one death and prevention of others.

Resources

TIPS FROM THE NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE CRISIS CENTER

Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.

Be non-judgmental. Don’t debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad. Don’t lecture on the value of life.

Don’t act shocked. This will put distance between you.

Don’t be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.

Offer hope that alternatives are available but do not offer glib reassurance.

Take action. Remove means such as weapons or pills.

Don’t leave the person alone.

RESOURCES FOR REFERRAL

If someone shares they are feeling like ending their life, reach out for help:

Take them to a doctor, local hospital emergency room or mental health professional.

Call 911 to get the immediate help the person needs to stay safe.

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with such a wide array of project types found in the region, a civil-site preparation company must make safety a top priority. DXI took an early lead in training its 350-plus employees “in-house”, to better serve clients. This gave us the ability to fit our training in as soon as the opportunity presented itself and to shape our schedule around the training that was needed. Led by a staff of highly qualified and certified safety professionals, DXI is easily able to meet any requirement needed to access the most basic to the most sensitive work sites.

DXI starts certifying employees from their first day on the job and throughout their entire career. DXI takes the approach of “cross training” all its employees, so they may better understand the many hazards associated with a company that specializes in so many disciplines. From background checks and new hire orientations to OSHA’s Core 4. DXI certifies in over 13 different classes, accounting for more than 2,200 safety and job-specific certifications. From Basic CPR to Confined Space and Hazardous Atmospheres. The company even has a dedicated staff of over 40 employees with current HAZWOPER 40 training on hand to quickly mobilize, if the job requires. DXI has held an “A” Grade with ISNetworld for well over 10 years to work with all our energy and industrial sector clients. The company currently holds a (.80) EMR, considered excellent by industry standards, for a company this size and with so many different capabilities.

Bob VandePol
Executive Director, Pine Rest Employee Assistance Program
Bob.vandepol@pinerest.org

Bob VandePol where he leverages behavioral health expertise to enhance the health and productivity of businesses. He previously served as President of Crisis Care Network, helping to lead it from a startup to the world’s largest provider of Critical Incident Response services to the workplace. He managed CCN’s Command Center in Manhattan following the 2001 terrorist attacks and led teams in response to many of our nation’s largest tragedies. He keynotes frequently on the topics of suicide prevention and postvention.

https://www.constructionexec.com/article/death-by-suicide-whose-fault-was-it

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your construction site — not if you want to have a life outside of work, too. Fortunately, top-notch camera systems record activities 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Therefore, you don't have to worry about missing a beat. And the best part? With the right system, you can access your cameras through a smartphone app, which means you can take a peek at your site at any time if you need to. Now that's the way security should be envisioned. Thank you, Technology.

Shawn Scarlata
CEO, SMART Security Pros

SMART Security Pros through its Mobile Video Guard solution protects construction sites, equipment yards, scrap and recycling yards, utility infrastructure sites, among other types of locations. After 22 years in law enforcement and 8 years operating a large security guard firm, the founder Shawn Scarlata knew there had to be a better way. Shawn set out to develop a solution that provided higher levels of security at a fraction of the cost of guard services.

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After more than 50 years in the turnkey site preparation business, DXI Construction has grown to meet the demands and overcome the challenges of working on these types of projects across the mid-Atlantic. Having dozens of crews that are pre-approved and a low EMR rating allows DXI to work on some of the most secure sites in the nation. With four offices around the region and a fleet of more than 500 pieces of GPS-enabled equipment and 19 underground utility crews, DXI routinely tackles projects with the most challenging schedules. From bidding and preconstruction to project management and completion, DXI has created a reputation for being a valued partner on projects of all types around the nation’s capital and beyond. For more information about DXI Construction, click here.
Coming Soon

October 10th – “Wisdom & Wine” A Business Enhancement Event With Networking
New Laws | New Tech | New OSHA | Oh S#^?!  
Host: Tracy Steedman, Esq. - Adelberg Rudow
4:00 - 6:30 p.m.

October 16th – “Meet The Primes”
MD State Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall - Timonium  
Host: Baltimore County Public Schools
8:00 a.m. - Noon

October 24th – “Wisdom & Wine” A Business Enhancement Event With Networking
Top Performers Make Top Performing Companies  
Host: Leslie Shreve - CEO, Productive Day®
4:15 - 6:30 p.m.

November 12th – “New Member Breakfast”
Consolidated Insurance Office – Owings Mills  
Host: Maryland Construction Network
8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
By Invitation Only

November 13th – “Direct Connect & Pre Network Presentation”
A General Contractor Get Together with a “Bird’s Eye” | “Hands – On” View of a Construction Project  
Host: Tradesmen International
4:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

November 19th – “Learn to Know” Business Enhancement Event With Networking
How Changing Water Regulations (Still) Continue To Affect Your Project At The Site Level  
Host: Andrew T. Der & Associates
11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Opportunities

Mahogany Inc. is looking for a Senior Project Manager superstar. An individual looking to grow to the next level of responsibility and challenge. This position will provide overall management of construction project from developing relationships, to bid preparation, project construction and through final acceptance by client.

Follow this link for complete details about the position.

A dedicated and dependable individual possessing extensive experience with construction companies is seeking employment. This candidate has most recently served as an office manager with duties including AP, AR, JC, PR, Month End Closings, Tax Reporting, Bids, etc..

Click here to view the resume and obtain contact information for this individual.

Let MCN help you fill your next job opening or find your next place of employment.

Please contact Verna at 443.98.7329 to see how MCN can help you make the connections you need to succeed.

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