

Working with Architects & Contractors

There are three main players involved in a building project that must work in concert with each other.

Owner (That's You!)

Designer

Contractor

Good Buildings Don't Just Happen

- They result from
 - a well-conceived process and
 - an effectively functioning team

OWNER (that's you!)

The initial ingredient in a good building project is a well-prepared, well-organized owner.

The OWNER is the responsible party because the project is the **OWNER'S** project. The **OWNER** has all of the **RISK**

You can retain the risk, or transfer it (at a cost) But, you cannot ignore it.

Most projects require an architect. This transfers some of the owner's risk to a design professional. Selecting an architect is a critical, but not a mystical element in producing good buildings.

One survey of design clients reported these criteria as important:

Trust (99%)

Ability to meet schedule (97%)

Ability to meet budget (95%)

Technical competence (99%)

SELECTING AN ARCHITECT

- 9 Have a database of prospective firms.
- 9 Send a Request for Information (RFI) to a selected group.
- 9 Select up to 5 to interview.
- 9 Select up to 3 for further investigation.
- 9 Make tentative schedule.
- 9 Negotiate agreement.

NEGOTIATE AGREEMENT

- 9 Review program requirements
- 9 Clarify any issues from interview or visits
- 9 Discuss scope of service
- 9 Discuss type of construction delivery
- 9 Agree on time schedule
- 9 Discuss basis and amount of fee

Basis for architect's compensation:

- 9 -Stipulated sum
- 9 -Percentage of construction cost
- 9 -Cost-plus
- 9 **Other fee-related issues:**
- 9 Reimbursable expenses
- 9 Hourly rates
- 9 Multipliers
- 9 **Have a good contract:**
- 9 Preferably based on a standard form
- 9 **The architect usually prepares the contract.**
- 9 Review it carefully.
- 9 Have legal counsel review it.
- 9 Understand your role and the architect's role-and responsibilities of each.

Consider these issues:

- 9 Communications and dispute resolutions
- 9 Approval of contractor's draws
- 9 Responsibility for cost estimates
- 9 Ownership of documents
- 9 Site visits
- 9 Existing conditions
- 9 "As-built" drawings
- 9 Change order procedures
- 9 Insurance
- 9 Definition of additional services

SELECTING A CONTRACTOR

- 9 Have a database of prospective firms.
- 9 Send a Request for Information (RFI) to a selected group.
- 9 Select up to 5 to interview.
- 9 Select up to 3 for further investigation.
- 9 Make tentative selection.
- 9 Negotiate agreement.

NEGOTIATE AGREEMENT

- 9 Review program requirements.
- 9 Clarify any issues from interviews or visits.
- 9 Discuss pre-construction services.
- 9 Discuss type of construction delivery.
- 9 Agree on time schedule.
- 9 Discuss any value engineering possibilities.

TYPES OF CONTRACTS

- 9 Time and materials
- 9 Cost plus
- 9 Multi-bid
- 9 Lump sum

Other Related Contract Issues

- 9 Overhead and profit
- 9 General conditions
- 9 Reimbursable expenses
- 9 Change orders
- 9 Coordination with Owner's work
- 9 Conduct

It is very important to have a good contract, guard against 'word of mouth promises'

- 9 preferably based on a standard form,
- 9 coordinated with the Owner-Architect agreement
- 9 Review it carefully
- 9 Have legal counsel review it
- 9 Understand everyone's role