

# McLean, Koehler, Sparks & Hammond

Certified Public Accountants/Business Consultants

## Building Construction

### Don't just manage – Train!

A senior executive recounts with chagrin his greatest management lesson. When he was in his 30s and had acquired considerable experience, he was hired by an *Engineering News-Record Top 400* contractor as the vice president of construction.

After 60 days, he was hauled on the carpet to explain the continual lack of performance by the project managers.

"I'm trying to manage," he said, protesting his innocence.

"I didn't hire you to manage anything," said the company's chief executive officer. "I hired you to train." His meaning was simple: Training is key to effective management. Well-trained subordinates know how to do things, lessening the need for managerial supervision.

Start to train supervisors in three important areas:

1. **Technical** -- Start here first. Technical training is easily done and shows big benefits because most supervisors know the ins and outs of construction techniques. Technical training is especially critical for new hires, who may not know your company's construction standards.
2. **Management** -- Follow up with job and crew training. Knowledge here varies widely. Work on company-wide standards. Start with one task such as scheduling, for example. Then progress to another management phase, like change orders.
3. **Personnel Relations** -- Lack of expertise in interpersonal relations is a major industry-wide shortcoming. Use your personal example in training of construction standards and management to show others how to deal with people. Your day-to-day example is the best training lesson possible.

**Remember -- "Don't manage -- train!"**

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