

INDUSTRY ISSUES

Project Construction Industry Today -- Issues, Challenges and Success Factors

ACCESS Leadership conducted interviews with I-LinCP members to gain an understanding of the issues facing the project construction industry today. The table below shows the issues, challenges and success factors we learned about in discussion with I-LinCP members with a brief description of each. We then show where that issue or success factor is dealt with in this Leadership in Collaborative Project Delivery (LinCPD) Program.

The LinCPD Program is grounded in a broad-based understanding of the construction industry and how projects are delivered by multi-skilled teams to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. As the program proceeds, we expect both the instructors and participants to gain even greater insight into the dynamics of the industry and ways to support project success through capable project leadership.

ISSUE & CHALLENGES	ADDRESSED IN LinCPD PROGRAM
<p>Staffing projects. This is an issue at all levels and results partly from significant retirement, especially of professional and skill craft employees. It’s especially challenging when the economy is good and unemployment is low.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce planning • Development of employees
<p>Skill, knowledge, capability of available workforce. There is a significant loss of knowledge through retirement and available workforce does not always have the skills/ capabilities needed. This includes some who lack planning and technical experience (e.g. BIM) and other gaps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce planning • Development of employees • Delegation
<p>Retention of capable employees. Because of the competitive job market and the perceived lack of “technical glamor” of project development and delivery, capable employees may be drawn to other industries (e.g. high tech) or higher salaries. Slows projects and the investment in employee development is lost to the organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee development • Values • Teamwork

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<p>Cost of projects. Competition is fierce for projects, in part because some small firms have been bought by larger firms. Fluctuation in materials cost due in part to tariffs also impacts project costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance measurement • Innovation • Customer Service
<p>Expected speed of project delivery. Timelines are being shortened. This may mean bidding and winning a project without detailed planning, input and cost estimates from project partners. Also puts pressure on project partners and may escalate conflict. But an opportunity for innovation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance measurement • Communication/dialogue • Innovation
<p>Leaders who are not committed, knowledgeable, present or fully open in providing information to the project partners, listening to partners or members or lack knowledge about aspects of the project or overall project plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Building relationships • Communication • Teamwork • Self-development
<p>Conflicts arise through the project. This was discussed as the nature of construction project delivery. When conflicts are anticipated, identified quickly and there is a process for resolution, these conflicts do not deter the project progress. If not, there is disruption or even claims filed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Conflict management • Customer service • Systems influences and complexity
<p>Inattention to quality or lack of accountability. Team members who lack the knowledge, skill or willingness to carry out tasks in a high-quality way or lack accountability for problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management • Performance measurement • Performance and accountability • Service

SUCCESS FACTORS	
Owner / leader who is fully committed to project. Engaged with planning, communication, ongoing work, problem solving and empowering team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall model of leadership • Awareness
A leader who is respectful, engages the full team and can work well with a diverse group of people, who recognizes differing strengths and needs, who sets the vision/ purpose, and who holds people accountable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building relationships • Teamwork • Vision/Purpose setting • Communication • Self-development
A team culture that is inclusive, positive and open as well as committed to delivering results. Includes being responsive to the needs of all team members on issues such as cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization realities/culture • Values and ethics • Communication (esp. dialogue)
Strong collaboration/trust. Team partners and members are collaborative and trust each other so problems get identified and each partners' needs are considered. The tone is respectful and inclusive, including of women and minorities. Team members listen to each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Building trusting, collaborative relationships • Teamwork • Communication
Knowledge/capability of team members. When each party knows what they are doing, plans well and continuously contributes the projects go well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing people • Developing yourself • Empowering individuals and teams
Clear purpose and vision. This must be well communicated at the outset, "bought into" by project partners, and maintained as a focus throughout the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Vision • Serving customers
Empowered team/members. Clear authority for actions and decisions that is delegated to team members (with appropriate support and training). Decision making at the lowest possible level to keep projects moving.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering teams • Sharing power through delegation • Leading change