

**Refuse to Lose:
Thriving as a landscape
Organization in a Shifting
Economy**

Presented By:
Kevin L. Dougherty
1710 N Lake Shore Drive
Sarasota, FL. 34231
941.926.0141
714.680.6585

Company Leadership

- Sales, Marketing and Estimating
 - What makes your company unique?
 - Are you the preferred supplier?
 - What is your closing ratio?
 - How loyal are your customers?
 - Don't play the traditional estimating game
- Financial
 - Making your numbers work
 - Understand all the cost categories and what it takes to make a profit
 - Know your financial position each day
 - Your financials, budgets, job costing, estimating have to tie together
- People and Production
 - Finding and keeping good people is a challenge unto itself
 - Journeymen
 - Foreman and superintendents
 - Office support
 - Middle managers
 - Future leadership
- Learn to focus on the future

Keep It Simple

Contracting is really a pretty simple business. If contractors are not careful, they can over complicate their businesses and fail to get the fundamentals correct. If your business is not as profitable as you would like, here is a basic checklist of some things you can do:

- **Raise prices:** Many contractors have more work than they can produce yet seem reluctant to raise prices. A 5%-10% increase in prices can have a huge impact on profits.
- **Strategic Job Costing Review:** Many contractors job cost but few review all jobs and look for common characteristics between winners and losers. Our experience has been that twenty five to thirty five percent of a contractor's jobs represent 100% of the contractor's losses.
- **Business Structure:** Contractors need to build a structure that fits their needs and personality, rather than let the structure just "happen". For many contractors, the best possible office manager and responsible foremen are keys to less stress and more profitability.
- **Set crews:** It is impossible to hold the field accountable if crew sizes, manpower and other details constantly shift.
- **Days and hour goals:** Foremen must be told hours and days on jobs and be asked to hit those targets.
- **Lead generation:** Referrals are great but smart contractors use marketing to turn work leads off and on as needed.
- **Sales skills:** There will always be someone cheaper than you. Realizing this and targeting customers where your point of difference matters is critical to long-term success.
- **Systems:** Contractors need basic but simple systems for communicating the estimate to the crews, job set up, ordering material and things that are routinely required. These systems need not be over complicated. Their purpose is to allow owners to see and understand what is going on with jobs even if they are not present

These are some of the basic areas contractors should target for profit improvement

Customer Service Checklist

- Check-in procedures
- Your team's impression
- Emotional intelligence
- Be wary of embarrassing and potential conflicts.
- Provide what the customer wants: time, service, and products.
- Check-out procedures
- Follow-ups and add-ons
- Handling customer complaints