

STEVENS
CONSTRUCTION
INSTITUTE, INC.

MANAGEMENT ADVISORS TO CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS

Book Reviews:

Richard Korman, Senior Business Editor, Engineering News Record and ENR.com writes:

*If you want to clear your head about something in construction contracting, just pick up consultant Matt Stevens' new book, *Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day*. It is like talking to your older brother who has clamped a hand on your shoulder and is telling you the blunt honest truth about the costs associated with schedule compression or right-sizing your overhead. Yes, this book is full of takeaways and sample equipment forecasts. But where it really shines is in discussions of resource allocations and the uses and significance of CPM schedules. Stevens makes them simple. It is in essence the ultimate, easy-to-digest book about the financial management of contracting for an industry where the younger people have college degrees and the older set don't exactly want to focus on finance. I've never seen anything more accessible on getting and managing work profitably.*

There's also a fascinating and tightly narrated chapter called "The Business of Contracting" on the changing nature of the construction industry. In it, Stevens discusses, among other subjects, how most young construction professionals "do not [and did not] go through the 'field' because they don't want to work" in the dirty and dangerous environment of the jobsite. They have "turned construction into a business" in which "craftsmanship is now assumed to be the same from contractor to contractor."

I am the owner of a medium sized heavy civil construction company. I have attended many management courses over the course of my 20+ year career. In addition, I have read many books on this subject matter. For those of you who are currently in the industry in management roles, I will venture to guess that when you read this book, almost instantly, the light will go on. You will see things that are familiar, things you are doing right, as well as things that you could do better. For those of you going through the higher education prior to starting out in the work world, this is an outline of how to do it right. Everyone employed in construction management should read this book. It is up to speed on current construction management practices, and the economy as it exists today for contractors.

Don Laskey
Laskey - Clifton, Inc.

This book by far the best available in the market. Trust me because I have read them all! It is in your face truth and facts. So many other books try to puff up the author versus addressing the issues that are a must to know. Experience contractors and inexperienced contractors regardless of tenure should be required to read this book to their company president. There is a lot of documentation, bookkeeping, codes and regulations, HR issues, financial management, and people skills that are part of day to day construction activity. This book covers them truthfully, informatively, and in great detail. Thanks for producing such a quality book!!!!

Mike Martin
Construction 2000, Inc.

My management team and I wanted to thank you for writing such a great book! On a personal note, I wanted to thank you as your book has helped me identify and focus on those absolutely vital processes and procedures that those before me overlooked, dismissed or feared. Never before have we been so on point with what direction our company should take.

We have made great progress implementing the processes detailed in your book. The bulk of our energy has been invested in increasing our "Speed of Process". It's a hell of a challenge but the results we are yielding are well worth it. After much discussion we came to the conclusion that we would be irresponsible if we did not ask you if you have converted your book into an overall Policy and Procedures Manual, or another similar format. If so, can we purchase that manual?

I look forward to hearing from you. Additionally, please let me know if there is anything we can do for you on our side of the country.

Thanks again

Michael A. Smith "Jr"
Vice-President
Argonaut Constructors

Matt, I found your recent article "Almost Virtual" very interesting and inspiring. Thank you for keeping us informed.

I also finished reviewing your book: "Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day" and find it to be very practical and useful. It's format is suitable for day-to-day use by the construction professionals in the field, including the "Business of Contracting" portion. I highly recommend this book to be used as an practical guide in doing business in today's highly complex construction industry and practice.

Dr. V.B. Burk, Director
Construction Management Program
Florida Atlantic University

I have read Mr.Stevens' book, Managing a Construction Firm.... and it has been extremely helpful to my company.

Christian Brown
Wayne Brown Design/Build
Morne Fortune, Castries, St.Lucia

In writing this book (Managing a Construction Firm On Just 24 Hours a Day), Matt has done an exceptional job focusing on the fundamentals of operating a PROFITABLE construction firm. Matt's book is a reminder that construction companies deserve to be rewarded for taking on risk and such risk requires intense control at every stage. Any firm, no matter its size, will prove successful and profitable by following these principals and logical approach."

Les Snyder
Senior Vice President
Barton Malow Company

I am in Queensland, Australia and a couple of years ago purchased Matt Stevens' book "Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day". This is easily one of the best books I have ever read.

Richard Lindell
General Manager
Gary Deane Constructions Pty Ltd

Matt, you completely caught me off guard by answering my email personally. Here goes. I work in the mud, the blood, and the beer. The people I work with must take their meds so they can work without killing each other. We laid 36 inch storm sewer in -2 degrees last week in Monee, Illinois. The boss is called "Little Hitler" he works hard not smart. He did not want me to run electrical power to the tank hole to pump water. Three 20,000 gallon Fiber Glass tanks floated. 10 days from now I will be removing three 12,000 gallon UST's and wrecking an old building in Indianapolis, Indiana, on my own. I borrowed the book from the Indianapolis library now I am going to purchase the book and keep it in my old F350 and use it everyday to work smarter. I am 65 years old and have not been able to keep money; now that will change. Thank you for clearly communicating your ideas, research and experience to guys like me. Also, I am the

qualifier for Highway and Utilities All for a construction license in North Carolina. I insisted that the owner read your book and emailed the title to her.

Robbie Dalton
ECC, Inc.

Mr. Stevens, I and my partners have recently started out our firm; we are refugees of the great production builder purge. The knowledge that you have in your book and on your web site have been tremendously helpful and I believe to be quite accurate. Thanks for putting you knowledge in writing.

Eric Dille President
B & D Professional Builders

Matt, I finished my first run through of your book. I think it is very well done and touches on good sound principles that we as Business Owners, Presidents, CEOs, etc. need to make sure our companies are adhering to. There are chapters that will be great tools for project managers and estimators to read.

There are some sections that are perhaps a little more tailored for the GC rather than a specialty sub such as myself, i.e. Schedule sections, although certainly describe the principals of developing a schedule, perhaps for a sub there are challenges in knowing all the variables outside of the subcontractor control and knowledge that are hard to build into the in house sub schedule until the GC has developed the master schedule.

Again, I am impressed with the book and will be purchasing more to share with my staff.

Thanks
Ian Blair
Blair Concrete
North Carolina

Matt, I have read Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day and thought it was an excellent book. I still keep at close at hand as a source of reference material.

Denise Cicchella MBA, CIA, CFE
Practice Leader Construction Audit
Senior Project Manager
Control Solutions International
New York, NY

Mr. Stevens provides information that will be useful to the new construction contractor as well as to the seasoned veteran. He discusses a wide variety of construction management problems from an academic viewpoint and then introduces hard practical advice that could only come from long personal experience. He provides solid examples of efficiencies and cost-effective alternatives always providing a path to save time and money and to improve company performance. He encourages understanding and use of tools one may already have rather than suggesting new expenditures - such as practical use of spreadsheets with many examples given.

The author has learned from his own experience, he has consulted for many firms of varying size and position in the industry, he has talked and studied with his students, his clients, his partners and competitors over years and he has developed an organized collection of useful advice about best practices for construction firm management in today's competitive markets.

I liked the book, I learned from it and I recommend it.

Ted Baker
CFO
ProFab Tech
Winter Haven, Florida

As a seasoned PM I have found some truly useful items within your guides and downloads. Working oversea is an adventure but, even here we find some insightful information that is relevant and useful to our group. Great stuff.

RJF, Green Zone,
Baghdad, Iraq

Matt,

My wife and I own an Interior Design Company. Not willing to ignore rehab and more recently construction opportunities any longer, we became contractors. Yes, I have a Management degree and extensive computer experience, but my career as a DJ never prepared me for what I would experience in the Construction business. I took a \$25 gamble on your book. It is the cornerstone of my education and I just wanted to thank you.

As a matter of fact, I never wanted to be rich and/or famous; I just want to be awesome. Thanks for helping me, and you can quote me on that.

All the best to you, your family and all that you do.

Bill Cox
Manager
The Giving Tree Designs

Matt, The book is excellent. It really rings true for me as I am a third generation carpenter who learned from the ground up working with my dad since I was nine.

Now that I am in business I can see why I am so frustrated by the résumés that come across my desk from guys that learn the trade out of the book.

I just got into it and already it is very helpful.

Thank you for the follow-up,

Karl Orth
Middlesex, New Jersey

Dear Matt - I've just finished reading your book "...on just 24 hours..." and found it both informative and sprightly, an excellent combination. Congrats on the good work.

Sam Florman
Kreislser Borg Florman
Scarsdale, NY

Matt, I am halfway through your book and even though I am President of a large national mechanical contractor, your book is both a great refresher and a wonderful primer for people entering construction.

Easy to comprehend, well organized and addresses the key issues of construction.

Mike Kotubey
President
Midwest Mechanical Contractors

Matt, Thank you. I am, as you say in your book, "a mud on the boots guy". In the beginning stages of a start up commercial contracting business. I have been working my way through your book. It has been a great help in the knowledge gap I have between running a site and running a construction company. It has demystified many of the procedures and added to my confidence in my decision to go out on my own, and I'm only half way through it.

Thanks again

Chris Lowes
CLIC Construction
Canada

Hi Matt, Want to let you know I thoroughly enjoy your newsletter. Several years ago, I took a class from you and automatically began receiving your newsletter. Much of the information you present is beneficial to us in Facilities since we rely on the construction industry and associative processes for executing our major projects, as well as self perform smaller projects and maintenance of our existing facilities. Keep up the good work! I look forward to attending another one of your classes in the future.

Steven M. Quickel, Director
Brevard County Facilities Department
Viera, FL

Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day by Matt Stevens is one of the finest that I have read in my 78 years.

Oliver Semmes - Semmes Inc

Matt, Our electrical contracting business is going through a transformation. We had a couple of rocky years but I believe that we are back on track to be a market leader. I am committed to being a total business education sponge. Your book is great! It was referred to me by a friend. I only wish that I bought the book directly from your website because I would've gotten the Excel spreadsheets and the course. I am particularly interested in the ROI spreadsheet that you show in the book. Is that available on your site anywhere? Are the 60 spreadsheets available on your site anywhere? Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Brian T. Vardiman
BEC Electric, Inc.

Great news - I hope you sell a ton of books! I have enjoyed reading it.

Werner Molzan
Mar-Will Construction Ltd
Vancouver, British Columbia

I am enjoying your "24 Hours" book immensely, well done!

Thanks,

Kim Robinson
Optimum Wall & Ceiling Systems Ltd.

I have and it is great! You and George Hedley are my online mentors. Each of you puts out invaluable information that in my opinion it is a mandatory read. Thanks so much to you and your staff.

Mike Martin
Travis & Michael's Construction Services

Hi Matt: First and foremost, let me tell you that "Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day" was amazing. I read it in a weekend, and loved it. It was so practical and insightful. Thanks,

Kate Resetarits
Resetarits Construction
Buffalo, NY

It's a great pleasure to communicate with you again. I do not know if you remember me but I spoke with you on the phone three years ago, when I got your book on managing construction. It is a great book.

At the time I got your book I did not have any experience in construction. With the combination of the knowledge I acquired from your book and my previous fifteen years of experience in the accounting/finance field, I was confident of my job performance. I was able to manage all business transactions and enhance new strategies. I consider your book a real business based training. You explained all business aspects & procedures as they need to be followed.

Luz Polanco
CFO - Vice President
R.L. Gordon & Company
Florida

I bought extra copies of your book to have my sons read. Good job.

Sonny Lindner
Johnson River Enterprises
Fairbanks, AK

Matt, I've listened to the CD and am in the process of reading your book. I'm in the HV power line construction contracting business and have found this info very useful. I own and operate my own business and I very much appreciate your insight to the business. When listening to your CD series I thought you had been studying my business for years (grin).

Although I thought I knew many of the practices, it's very helpful to listen to them explained. I really liked the info you provided on the bidding process. And as you mentioned our company has basically developed our own bidding Excel Spreadsheet- which works for us. Thanks Again,

Willie Pyette
Great Falls, Montana

Matt, as always you really get the nuts and bolts of managing construction. I use your book in my spring semester and it is working out nicely.

Thanks, Dan Massuto, Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades

Congratulations, Matt. I read your book several years ago and your advice helped me grow my business!

Diane C. Williams
President
Desert Commercial Concrete

I am a young project manager in relation to the many other PM's that I work with on a daily basis and am currently reading your publication "Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day". First off, I would like to thank you for such a comprehensive collection of do's, don'ts and tips that would have made learning my career much easier had I had this book in hand when I offered the opportunity to learn to manage project management 6 years ago. I am currently 28 have a degree in mechanical engineering and small business management. I came across your email in the book where you offer information on scheduling and would like to request any information you could send that may be of use to me. I am always looking for ways to be more efficient and streamline my workflow both in the office and on the projects I am involved with. I am involved in all aspects of construction projects including planning, design, estimating, scheduling, purchasing and bidding new projects. I would be grateful if you could provide any resources that you think may be of use to me or if you could recommend any online tools

that could be of value to me educationally or in my everyday work. Thanks for the great publication!

Best Regards,

Jason Young
Project Manager
Connor Contracting, Inc.

Hi Matt - Thanks for the reply! Our GC could not explain as clearly as you did. Makes total sense. Best, Lane.

Lane Chesley
Eugene Stolfus Architects
Harrisonburg, Va

Hi Matt,

I just bought your book, "Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 hours a Day". I am on page 167. What a great book! I have built custom residential homes in Montana and I will be soon starting to build luxury custom homes.

Best Regards,

Mark Butler
Amaru Construction

Matt,

Thanks so much for getting back to me. I will work on it with the help you gave me. FYI, just purchased your 6 CD set for our owner – no time to read and I told him what an awesome book this is. Thanks again – really appreciate the help.

Teri Flannery
Controller
Masonry By Mohler

Dear Sir, We are Abraj El Dera General Contracting and Trading LLC co. established in Baghdad Iraq, I have read your book (Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day) and admired your work (I receive your newsletter) very much,

Eng. Abbas Elbawi
Owner and G.M
Abraj el Dera Co
Iraq-Baghdad

I have used your 24 hour book as a reference for my CM graduate class here at DU. It has been a big help in building schedules, and tracking the projects that have made up our assignments.

I found that your book related better to what actually takes place in the field. The books used for class were too dry and didn't cover what actually goes on. Thanks again.

Douglas S. Szafranowski
Denver University-Daniels School of Business

Matt, Great article on Lean. I think the process is the key and simplifying day to day operations is a must. I am 31 years old so I am in that younger generation that believes in team work and breaking the status quo but being careful not to reinvent the wheel to upset senior management that have a few years on me.

It's been probably 3 years now since I attended your lecture with in Rocky Hill. I've read your book 3 times "Managing on Construction Firm on 24 hrs a day". I don't write often but I am listening and reading intently.

I still agree with the quote in your book that the Construction industry is the best industry to work in. As a metal stud and drywall estimator/project manager this year has been less pleasant than years past with competitive bidding turning into ridiculous low bidding but the industry is still great and will get better.

I can't read enough about "Lean". I look for to reading your next book and appreciate any references towards books, and articles I should read that I may not have yet. Knowledge is power in this industry. Thanks for your help.

Thank you,

Patrick Ferland
Estimator/Project Manager
Complete Interior Systems Inc,
South Windsor, CT

Matt, I did receive the Audio Books and since I have a 2 hour commute every day they are great. I really like what I have heard so far and I feel that not enough people are

doing what they should be doing. It seems that our industry is getting worse about taking short cuts or just plain doing things the wrong way because lack of an understanding of how things should be done. Once I finish these tapes I plan on moving on to your book "Managing a Construction Firm on Just 24 Hours a Day."

I am working my way to eventually doing some consulting and also doing some teaching and all this information is a great tool. Keep up the good work. Thanks

Enrique Gonzalez
Spring, Texas