

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with The Family Business Institute and The CEO Roundtable Program for Contractors. Thanks for tuning in today.

Today, I want to talk about probably the biggest problem facing the entire industry, which is getting employees. The fact of the matter is we probably have 10 positions open in construction for each person who is really interested in it right now. And this is true across the country. It's true in virtually every organization I work with, is they're looking for good people, better people, more people who want to be in construction. We have a shortage of skilled craft workers. We have a shortage of plain helpers. We've got a shortage of estimators, project managers, superintendents, right down the line, virtually every position, and even in leadership.

So, job A for all of you is getting new people and keeping that sort of engine working and working well at all times. So, what's going to allow you to compete in this marketplace where there's more demand for people than there is supply, and compete successfully? Well, the first thing I'd suggest for you is make sure you take a real good look at your pay and benefits. Are you middle of the road with your area? Are you up to standard, first of all, on those things? But I want to go a step further there. Most of our clients are among the best in their areas. So, most of you listening are among the best in your area and therefore you probably have better than average people. So really, as you look at your pay and benefits, you're not talking about being average. You're really talking about probably being upper quartile or even near the top of your industry in the pay and benefits.

So put that lens on as you look at your pay and benefits. Am I near the top of the industry? Because if I want to get the top-of-the-industry people and retain the top-of-the-industry people, I need to be probably in that top pay and benefits area. And by the way, you should probably always continue to try to tweak that, to improve it a little bit. Think, if I do one thing to improve the benefits of my folks each year, what a nice psychological impact that can have on not just the employees but their families, in a lot of cases.

Number two, make sure you have a great place to work. And sometimes you have to step back a second because we're all proud of what we have and all of that but take that realistic look. Look at the people that might've left the organization over the last couple of years. And why did they leave? Why did they listen to offers from somebody else? I oftentimes hear, "Well, they got an offer they couldn't refuse." Well, why were they listening to the offer to start with? Why did they even consider that? Why didn't they think of your business as a family, as the place to spend their career?

But try to take off your biased lens and look at your organization realistically and make sure it does have a great culture, it is a great place to work. And if it's not, change that. If it is already, keep working on it. Don't neglect it because that's most important. What you find a lot of times when you're recruiting people and even when they come in and interview, they'll catch whether there's a passion among the leaders and the people they interview with, whether this is a great place to work or not. They may have already heard on the street that this is a great place to work. So, if you can get that buzz and have that buzz internally, I think you'll find when people come in and interview that you end up capturing more than you would otherwise.

Make sure your search for people is multifaceted. Interestingly, certainly with the internet, it's an ever-changing world. I think Indeed now is probably the number one online place where people actually look for jobs and advertise for jobs and that sort of thing. But there's always a new one. There are always a couple of construction specific. Lots of people with LinkedIn, lots of people recruiting through Facebook. I heard a story the other day of somebody who advertised in the newspaper and got a couple of new superintendents, because I guess old-timers still look at the newspaper. Who would have thought, right? The point here is to stay multifaceted.

Always have your tentacles out and not just in an advertising sense, but also calling the people in your industry, talking to your subcontractors, or your contractors if you are a subcontractor, your suppliers, your architects, engineers, your

cohorts. Always be looking for people, always be putting the word out there that you're looking for people. And I think you'll find more coming your way. That network that you establish is as important as anything. And keeping that network alive is very important. Don't neglect that network.

Internal incentives work very well. Again, the base to that working well is having a great culture. If you have a great culture, the internal incentives work because your people don't want to bring on other people that are not going to hold their weight or reflect badly on them. If they've got great pride in the organization, they want to bring other good people in to work with them. And that enthusiasm, again, sells. So internal incentives definitely work.

For certain positions and certainly higher positions in the company, recruiters can be effective. A lot of ineffective stuff and a lot of turnover results from recruiters as well. So again, it's probably not a single solution that helps, but it's not one you should neglect. If you're looking for good people, there are good people that end up going through those channels and come through those channels.

And finally, the most important thing of all is probably, as the ultimate leader of your organization, make sure you stay involved in both the recruiting side of it, the networking side of it, the interview side of that, in getting people on board. And even when they're on board, make sure you're connecting with your people so that, again, you build that culture and build that retention and they get onboarded well and happily into your organization.

So again, it is a challenge out there trying to get people. But follow those steps. And I think you'll at least get your share and hopefully the better of your share. So again, Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper. Thanks for tuning in.