



connEx
Extreme Performance
for People and Projects

“Building is the quintessential act of civilization.” Tracy Kidder

According to a June 2016 report by McKinsey & Company, large capital projects take 20% longer to finish and 80% of them are over budget. It’s time to create some disruptive change and look at our projects in a whole new way.

Leveraging our successful strategies for developing emotionally intelligent, effective leaders, we are now applying that knowledge to the creation of emotionally intelligent, effective project teams. We call it connEx: where we build the people while we build the project. This process results in highly capable people and project teams that achieve outstanding results relative to safety, quality, schedule and budget.

1) **PEOPLE FIRST:**

In order to execute the plan, we must make sure that the people are optimized as individuals and as a team. This initial focus on the people insure that the plans are properly executed and that all team members are working together.

- a) You must build the people before you build the project. It is our goal to assemble as many people in the beginning as possible including owners, designers, program managers, contractors, trade partners, vendors, suppliers, facilities maintenance folks, and end users.
- b) We start with an introduction to emotional intelligence and the basics of **connEx**. Everyone learns what emotional intelligence is, how it can be measured and improved, and how it relates to project and personal success. We also introduce the concept of physical well-being, peak performance, and the mind-body connection and how it affects emotional, physical, and mental performance, which contribute to project success.

- c) Project team members take the EQi 2.0 evaluation and Symptom Survey (physical evaluation), and a personality test based on Jung's work (similar to Myers Briggs). We will take the project team through their results and how it affects team dynamics, communication, stress management, relationships, and ultimately, personal, professional, and project success.
- d) Each project team member will create their own personal, professional, health, and project goals. While we are in this process, it's a good time to focus on areas in the project stakeholders' lives that they want to change-finance, health, a new hobby, quitting smoking, eating better, etc.
- e) We determine the group scores and address any group developmental needs as well as the project needs.
- f) NOTE: We highly recommend that this process be a week-long to two week-long retreat that connects the team in an irrevocable and profound way and teaches them good habits of great nutrition, sleep, recovery, stress management, and exercise. If you can't commit this amount of time, we recommend as long as possible for this initial step of evaluations, team building and education. If you can't commit this amount of time prior to the project, we recommend you do half days at the beginning of the project devoted to this vital work.

This may seem ridiculous to some of you hard-nosed construction folks. There is a reason for this recommendation. When I managed leadership programs for Skanska, it was five weeks spread throughout the year. I saw that consistently the team really came together during the middle of the second week. If you can't do two weeks, do a week. If you can't do a week, do a weekend. If you can't do a weekend, do a day. If you can't do a day, then during the first month of the project, do half days of the people stuff every single day. The other recommendation for these extended retreats is no cell phones or computers and no checking in at work. There is something miraculous that happens after three days without electronics. Ideas start flowing. Health returns, creativity flourishes and people connect with each other.

2) PLAN:

We establish an overall plan with the input of as many stakeholders as possible with milestones and metrics.

- a) Establish meeting ground rules, project mission statement, shared values, critical success factors, team matrix, and rocks in the road. This includes the entire life cycle of the project from concept to demolition or re-use. This includes design, construction, commissioning/turnover, and facilities maintenance.
- b) Use the Last Planner System to create a meaningful project plan that drives value, eliminates waste, and improves the entire process. Prior to the Last Planner process, we begin Step 2, Build the People. We create the trust and relationships first so that the Last Planner System process goes smoothly with open, honest information sharing. There is a focus on collaboration from the very beginning, and there is an integrated form of agreement signed by all parties. For Owners who cannot sign an integrated form of agreement, we encourage the most collaborative contract that is appropriate to that Owner.

3) PLAN/DO/CHECK/ACT: THE RIGHT METRICS AND RESOURCES WHEN YOU NEED THEM:

Every person has individual goals and the project has project goals that are agreed to by all parties. These metrics are meticulously tracked and adjustments are made to ensure success.

- a) All team members agree on project goals and key performance indicators such as schedule, budget, quality, safety, turnover, training, facilities maintenance, and end user requirements. We will identify hot buttons for all project stakeholders, the things that keep them up at night, and track them as well. We will take the group through project goals so that everyone is clear on the overall goals and how their personal goals and company goals tie into this entire process. We will also discuss the basics of communication, roles, and responsibilities for each project stakeholder and company.
- b) Once these metrics are established, we will vigorously track them with The Client Feedback Tool.
- c) There is a constant evaluation for individuals and the project concerning having the right resources (information, communication, capital, human capital, etc.) We use a customized list similar to the Gallup 12 questions so that every person knows all of the resources needed to move the work forward. This information ties into the Last Planner System and the near term schedules. This constant feedback

- loop assures minimum down time and schedule delays due to a lack of resources. We will track this with The Client Feedback Tool.
- d) Resource allocation and flow are critical to the success of the project, and this will be a top priority for the project team, to ensure that all resources are available when they are needed.
 - e) Project Team Health Assessment: We will set metrics for the key performance indicators for personal and project success and measure these metrics throughout the project with The Client Feedback Tool.
 - f) When we check the metrics (at least monthly), we will make adjustments on what is not working and celebrate what is working. Every individual will also track progress on their personal goals and meet with their accountability partner often. We will also be available to meet individuals for coaching sessions as required.
 - g) There is much accountability built into this process. We have cross-function accountability partners. For instance, the architect representative might be the accountability partner of a contractor's project manager. The owner's representative might be the accountability partner of a superintendent. They hold each other accountable throughout the course of the project for reaching both personal and project goals.

4) PERFORMING TEAM: HIGHEST PERFORMANCE PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY FROM EVERY TEAM MEMBER ALONG WITH TEAM METRICS ENSURES A HIGH PERFORMING TEAM THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT:

When every individual is performing at their highest level mentally, physical and emotionally, and these individuals are aligned in the execution of a perfect project outcome, the project can't help but be successful.

- a) This preliminary work with emotional intelligence and peak physical performance give participants a better understanding of themselves, their limitations, and what to work on. We start with some initial exercises to set a baseline. One is called the Four Quadrants. Participants divide a piece of flip chart paper into four quadrants and label them family, this project, personal, and future vision. At the top, they put their name and their favorite piece of music. At the bottom, they put some of their challenges for the project, personally, and professionally. This is a great exercise. It breaks down barriers and creates a lot of emotional threads among the participants. We keep this

- information for each individual forever so we can check in occasionally to see what has changed. We will also revisit this exercise at the end of the project.
- b) We also have all project stakeholders write a letter to themselves dated the last day of the project that lists all of their accomplishments that they have attained as a result of the program as well as the results of the project. This future diary plants all of their accomplishments and project success in their subconscious so that even if they aren't thinking about them consciously, they are still working on them. Recently, we have given the participants the option of making a mind movie, which is a visual future diary. We could also make a mind movie for the project showing tangible outcomes.
 - c) Individuals can track peak performance progress by taking the Body Battery Inventory, our evaluation that tracks stressors and recovery activities to ensure that the individual is keeping an eye on all of the things that contribute to peak mental, physical, and emotional performance.
 - d) We also teach everyone how to coach each other. There is a simple methodology where project stakeholders perform peer-to-peer coaching and group coaching, using the project as a backdrop and catalyst to help each other attain all of their goals and overcome any issues.

5) PROJECT SUCCESS:

We support the project and all stakeholders throughout the duration of the project. We offer continuous monitoring, 24/7 coaching, and ongoing learning modules that support the project goals and individual goals. This ensures the greatest possible chance of success for every single project.

- a) We deliver learning modules spread throughout the project on various topics such as team-building, innovation, communication, relationships, stress management, peak performance, time management, presentation skills, innovation, and problem solving. All of these sessions will be in the context of the project, so we can address anything that is getting off track. We create an atmosphere of learning, not an atmosphere of training. We also use the latest studies in neuroscience that tells us how people learn and retain information. We involve as many of the senses as possible during the learning process. We utilize reflective learning continually because repetition creates retention. We reflect each week

we meet upon personal success and project success and measure the metrics that we have designated to determine progress. These learning modules may also include areas specific to the project or group such as business strategies and vision. The programs we provide are truly customized to each individual, to each group, and to each company, and each project. And with minimal lecture and self-directed, experiential learning, activity-based learning, each program is truly unique. This ongoing learning and checking in ensures success of individuals and the project.

- b) This process ensures project success by maximizing the potential of every single person on the project, create measurable metrics for individuals and the project that are continuously tracked, and making adjustments throughout the project to maximize project success.

Our Team:

Dr. Andrea Robbins

Dr. Andrea Robbins' amazing career spans 32 years. In her clinical practice, she often works with patients that the medical community has given up on. Her gift is to take fragmentary bits of information and draw correct conclusions. Andrea manages the physical component of the connEx programs and has improved the performance and health of hundreds of our participants. She is a second generation Chiropractor and board certified Naturopath. People under her care eat better, manage their stress better, and perform better.

Brent Darnell is leading authority on emotional intelligence and a pioneer of its use in the construction industry. He has been teaching emotional intelligence and soft skills to the AEC industry for the past 16 years. He has worked in over 100 companies in more than 20 countries around the world teaching emotional intelligence and soft skills since 2000. He is an adjunct professor at Auburn and Penn State, and was recently named one of the Top 25 Newsmakers for 2012 by Engineering News Record for "transforming alpha males into service focused leaders".

Gretchen Gagel is a recognized expert in the construction industry, consulting to both "owners" on strategies and tactics to optimize project and program delivery; and consulting to contractors, engineering firms, and material and equipment suppliers on how to effectively serve these clients and achieve organizational success. Gretchen works in partnership with her clients to

determine strategies for more closely aligning the value chain to reduce construction costs and schedules, and improve profitability. Gretchen has a proven track record of measurable results with her clients. She is a prolific writer and sought-after speaker in the construction industry.

Lou Bainbridge is a renowned expert in team development for the AEC industry with over 35 years of experience. His area of focus has been in organizational strategy, the development of high performing teams, and the development of people. For the past four decades, he has developed partnering models and high performing team models that improve productivity, quality and safety at the job site level. He has been instrumental in helping the industry to move away from the “design, build and litigate” model to more collaborative project delivery methods.