

Being Your Client's Most Effective Problem Solver

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Through various management seminars, executive conferences and self-improvement books, many of us are well aware of “*Effective Problem Solving*”. The steps taken usually manifest in this order:

- Identify the problem
- Create solution alternatives
- Implement on a solution
- Follow-up and evaluate

The question that seems to vex most people is the “How”, especially in the context of working on your commercial projects and the unknowns that lay ahead. Let's look at a case study.

The scene is a 32-acre commercial site of eleven buildings with elevation and grading issues. Based on this terrain, the engineer and architect identified in the early phases of the project that accessibility would be a problem if not addressed early in the site planning.

That is where the professional consultant can be effective, by looking ahead to determine the problems and negotiate solutions through these obstacles.

While keeping in mind the Client's objective for their buildings, the engineer worked with the architect to develop “accessible paths of travel” that were in compliance with the building department's standards. Created by the engineer to flow with the site's terrain, these accessible paths were then included in the architect's plans.

What was the nugget to be learned from the above scenario? A key to problem solving isn't always the solution that was implemented. It is the blending of creative planning and engineering skills with an eye for solutions. An effective problem solver starts the process with the confidence of knowing that there is a solution, while utilizing their experience and talents. A confident attitude towards problem solving will always yield effective results.

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