Effective Scope Management

The best-laid plans and projects can go awry if key personnel are distracted by tasks that weren't agreed to during a job's planning phase. If the project gets too big or off course, the results can be disastrous. Scope management provides a plan for staying on task and on budget. Adopt a plan that compartmentalizes a project into more manageable stages, so you can maintain your focus on what needs to be done and, thus, avoid costly distractions. Here are three simple steps to improving your construction company's scope management:

Define your terms.

The pre-project planning phase includes estimating and final bid submission. Be sure to discuss topics such as what the owner wants vs. what you can deliver, any plans for bringing in subcontractors, and any foreseeable problems and change orders. This is the time to define the contract terms as specifically as possible to help assure you'll be paid should major changes occur. And of course, make sure you have it in writing.

Keep an eye on the estimate.

During the contract performance phase, when the job is actually under way, regularly compare the original estimate to your current job cost status. Doing so will give you an idea of where you stand on the budget, as well as help expedite the change order process should one arise. In that event, make sure all pertinent parties approve the change and sign off on it.

The goal is to prevent scope creep, the slow and unplanned mutation of a project at the hands of a series of small scope changes. Individually, these changes may seem harmless, but together, they can have a major effect on the execution and ultimate outcome of your project.

Bring it home.

The third phase of scope management is project wrap-up. If you haven't encountered distractions up to this point, you will now. It's imperative that you stay focused for a short punch list and a successful, efficient completion. Make sure the team members that were designated to close out the project during the pre-project planning phase are free to do so.

Most projects begin with good intentions and a general agreement on what the outcome will be. Yet, sadly, the worst can often come at job's end when last-minute changes turn into long running disputes. So, rather than relax at this point, double your efforts to see the project through to completion. This includes not only reacting quickly and concisely to the punch list, but also clearly communicating with the owner.

New Local Tax Reporting Tool by JustinTime Software

With the economic downturn, construction companies have been seeking work outside their normal regions. One of the biggest hurdles you'll face is staying on top of the numerous obligations to local tax agencies. A tax headache is only one mistake away, be it a missed payment, a filing deadline or incomplete records. You can safely assume that a tax auditor presenting an assessment of additional taxes, penalties, and interest will not look kindly on an "I didn't know I was required to do that" claim.

Now that we have received many new Ohio customers, we have a clear understanding of the burden of local tax reporting many companies endure. To address the complexity of local tax reporting and special reporting requirements, we have created the JustinTime Local Tax Excel Report .

The Local Tax Excel Report program will extract Sage Master Builder payroll data and generate a variety of reports in Excel providing you with reliable summary and detail information for local tax reporting. Our software handles any differentials that are applicable. You may also print a Site Tax Report showing wages and tax withholdings, a Residence Tax Report, or a combined Site and Residence report.

The benefit of having the reports exported to excel is the valuable time saved when verifying wages and withholding as well the precious dollars saved in catching mistakes before they turn into penalties. Please contact our office for more information or to schedule a demonstration.

Tech Support
Calls From Our Customers

After submitting my first progress billing (AIA application for payment) I tried to post it and SMB will not allow me.

When looking at the error, user did not have an income account number entered in the setup at menu 3-7. Just click on the Setup Button and enter the proper income account.

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I was entering an a/p invoice and received an "Unhandled Exception Error. String was not recognized as a valid DateTime" and SMB shut down.

The system date is not properly set. All you need to do is change it. Go to Start>Settings>Regional and Language options and click on the customize button. Click on the date tab. Make sure the short date format is MM/dd/yyyy and date separator is /.

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