



- » [Home](#)
- » [Subscribe](#)
- » [eNews](#)
- » [ARW eNews](#)
- » [Subscription Customer Service](#)
- » [Online](#)
- » [Breaking News](#)
- » [Bulletin Board](#)
- » [Calendar](#)
- » [Blogs](#)
- » [Career Center](#)
- » [Digital Edition](#)
- » [Web Showcases](#)
- » [Product of the Month](#)
- » [Showrooms](#)
- » [Webinars](#)
- » [Current Issue](#)
- » [Cover Story](#)
- » [Features](#)
- » [Columns](#)
- » [Industry News](#)
- » [Products](#)
- » [Resources](#)
- » [AEC Store](#)
- » [Archived Digital Editions](#)
- » [Archives](#)
- » [Buyers Guide](#)
- » [Classified](#)
- » [Industry Links](#)
- » [Market Research](#)
- » [Best of Success](#)
- » [Marketing Promos](#)
- » [RC Info](#)
- » [Media Kit](#)
- » [Editorial Calendar](#)
- » [Special Collections](#)
- » [Cool Roof Supplement](#)
- » [Architectural Roofing & Waterproofing](#)

Search in: Editorial Products Companies

Roofing Contractor

Search

Seminar Session: Recruiting, Training and Retaining Employees

December 28, 2006

ARTICLE TOOLS

[Email](#) [Print](#) [Reprints](#) [Share](#)

The session titled "Recruiting, Training and Retaining Employees" was led by Ken Kelly, president of Kelly Roofing, Naples, Fla., and Paul Brockman of Roof Maintenance, Nashville, Tenn. Kelly led off the session by describing his own entry into the family business at 17 after his father was injured in a fall. He recommended that contractors consult Michael Gerber's book *The E-Myth*, which describes how typical small businesses get their start and details why many eventually fail.



Ken Kelly

According to Gerber, many small business owners were once hardworking employees learning a trade and perfecting their craft while making a profit for someone else. "Then they are bitten by the entrepreneurial bug and decide they can do it better and make more money in their own business," said Kelly, noting that the "E" in the title stands for "entrepreneurial." "A few months into business ownership, they realize owning a business has little to do with knowing roofing. It doesn't matter how well you can shingle a roof or install flashings."

Understanding financial statements, labor laws, working with employees and other management tasks now become paramount, and many business owners find themselves ill-equipped to handle them. "That is why 90 percent of all small businesses end in less than five years," said Kelly. "How old is your company?"

"When surveyed, most employees cite their boss as the No. 1 reason they don't like their jobs," said Kelly. "As a business owner or manager, if I ask you what your top three problems are, one of them would be your employees. It's ironic if you think about it. Probably not too long ago, you were on the other side of the fence."



Ken Kelly (third from left) shares his insights on recruiting employees after the seminar.

When it comes to working with employees, a paradigm shift is needed, asserts Kelly. "A paradigm shift is an immediate change of thought that completely goes against all that you believe is true." He pointed to his own experience in a hospital waiting room as an example. As Kelly and his family anxiously waited for news on a family member who had suffered a brain aneurism, a father shared a seat with them in the intensive care waiting room. His two small boys were running around the room, screaming, jumping on chairs and even knocking magazines out of people's hands. When someone pointed out to the father that the waiting room was not the place for this type of behavior, the father replied, "You're right, but I'm not sure what to do. They just lost their mother and I don't quite know how to tell them."

"What you just experienced was a paradigm shift," said Kelly. "When you heard that story, I bet you, too, wanted to strangle those kids. But when viewed from another perspective, what you knew as truth changed. When it comes to recruiting, training and retaining employees, what is needed is a paradigm shift." You've got to see the company through your employees' eyes and avoid common management pitfalls. "Don't let your company be the rule. Be the exception."

Kelly urged contractors to hire from outside of the roofing industry. "In an age of industry change, such as ours, new talent is what we need," said Kelly. "It is easier to teach an employee roofing than how to be a good person. Many of our salesmen are former bartenders."

According to Kelly, a down economy is the best time to be on the lookout for talent, as many companies make employment cuts to save profit in an economic downturn. "Now may be your chance to assemble a dream team"

Brockman identified with Kelly's depiction of the typical entrepreneur. "I went into it with a hope and a prayer and a credit card, and it's been a success," said Brockman. "But now I realize that in the beginning, I didn't know anything about running a company." He soon realized that minimizing turnover was essential, and he focused on hiring the right people and giving them the proper training. "You take the extra steps, and the employees will realize what you're doing for them. They'll pay you back with 110 percent effort," he said.

Kelly alluded to another business book, *Good to Great* by Jim Collins, at the session's conclusion. "Collins says, 'Get the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats.' When you do, the bus drives itself."



Paul Brockman emphasizes that proper training is crucial to success in the construction industry.



WHEN THE WEATHER TURNS UGLY YOUR ROOF SHOULDN'T.

SEE MORE

George Pfeiffer
DensDeck
OUTLASTS THE OTHERS



ANYTHING YOU POST ONLINE, ANYONE CAN SEE.

THINK BEFORE YOU POST.

cybertipline.com

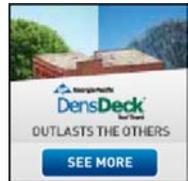


U.S. Department of Justice





Did you enjoy this article? [Click here](#) to subscribe to the magazine.




WSRCA Expo June 14-17
at the Peppermill Resort and Casino.
www.acmecone.com

© 2009 BNP Media. All rights reserved. | [Privacy Policy](#)