



October 29th, 2020

Best Practices

PARTNERSHIP

Written by: Jesse LaDousa, Chief Operating Officer

Many professional service firms like ours use the phrase “We partner with our clients”. While this can be a catchy phrase for salespeople to use when trying to land a new customer, it can easily get lost once a project begins. Many firms fall into the “order taker” role once the work starts, forgetting the overall objectives of the project. Instead, they just begin taking tasks from the customer and delivering them one by one.

We believe this approach will never produce the results that our customers are looking for. Losing sight of the business objectives and not measuring against them over the course of a project will lead to work straying off course; leaving the customer with a product that is likely over budget, past schedule, and missing key features.

To combat this, we must fully engage with the customer and truly become a partner. One of the benefits of our firm’s longevity is that we have worked in dozens of industries. While we have specialized knowledge in some, we know

how to quickly get up to speed on any customer’s business and understand how to drive out pain points. This allows us to embed ourselves in our customer’s business, speaking the same language they do, and talking across the various departments. With knowledge of their processes and systems we help them see things with an outside set of eyes. This can quickly lead to solution options they may have not thought of.

Additionally, there is a personal connection that the members of the service firm need to make with the customer team. This may be as important as the focus on understanding the business mentioned above. In order to be true partners, we must learn about and get to know who we are working with. The human connection is imperative to partnership, given that customers don’t hire firms, they hire people. Likewise, firms like ours don’t have customers; they have individuals that they deliver value to. That value, in turn, benefits the business they work for. Partnering with people requires empathy, which I would argue can never

be fully realized unless you spend the time getting to know someone beyond just the project work they hired you to complete.

We've been lucky over the last three decades to be trusted with difficult and important projects from our customers. These projects matter greatly to their companies and are critical investments. We could never have gained the trust to take on these hard projects without our partnership approach.

CONTACT US

