

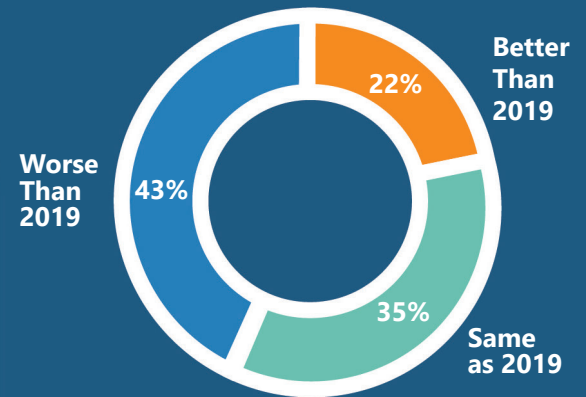
HOME WORK

How Many Staff Will WFH After the Pandemic?

As Many As Possible
58%

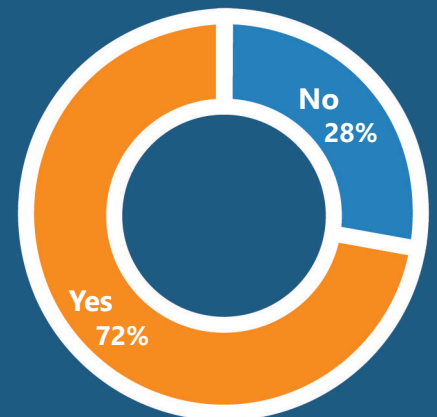
Same or Less
42%

PROFITABILITY FOR ALL OF 2020



Source: PSMJ's Senior Executive Briefing
A/E/C financials ... MORE on p. 4

SIGNS OF STAFF FATIGUE BECAUSE OF WFH?



Source: PSMJ's Senior Executive Briefing
DOL Guidance MORE on p. 5

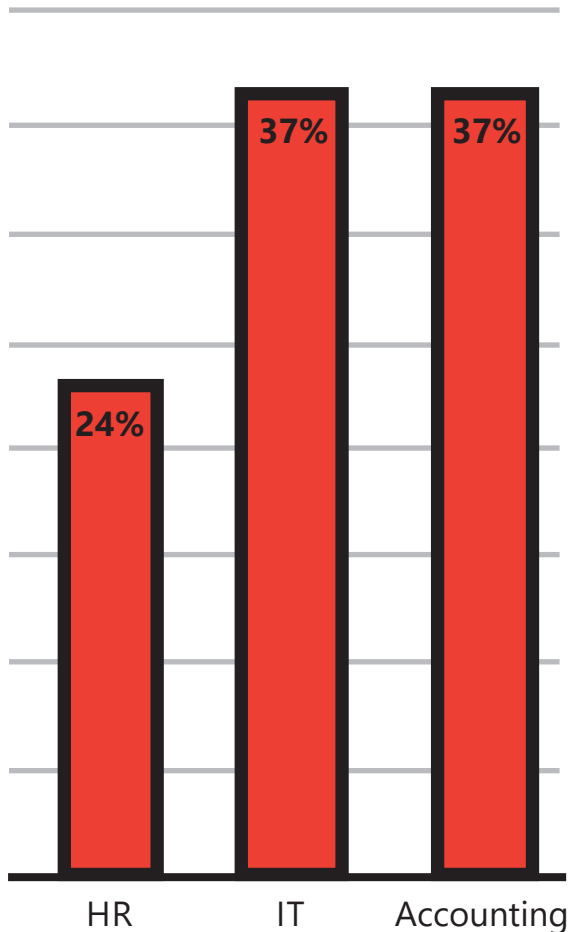
Source: PSMJ's Senior Executive Briefing
Where we are ... MORE on p. 2 - 3

OUTSOURCE ADMIN TO FOCUS ON A/E/C

The coronavirus pandemic is affecting A/E/C firms in many ways that might have been easy to predict—remote working and downsizing, for example, were two obvious business decisions that managers had to make immediately. But other moves that were set in motion before the pandemic was even on the horizon now also seem logical. One example: outsourcing administrative operations to third-party vendors.

Some of the firms that have been forced to downsize in the past few months have decided to focus their in-house talents on what they do best—design and engineering—and outsource many of their administrative tasks. At the same time, some professionals who recently lost their positions and are now hanging out their own shingles realize they have neither the time nor the talent for admin work.

OUTSOURCE BUSINESS PROCESS



Source: Clutch 2019 Small Business BPO Survey

THIRD PARTY

Neither of these pandemic-driven outcomes occurred to Michael Complita and his partner Peter Tarabochia back in 2018 when they launched SeeSaw Services, which provides accounting, administrative, and HR for the A/E/C industry. The idea arose during an informal lunch between Complita, principal of Elliott Bay Design Group, a Seattle-based naval architecture and marine engineering firm, and Tarabochia, the firm's CFO.

“We were commiserating about how the day-to-day demands of admin work took our attention away from things like strategic planning and new business development,” Complita says. “That’s not only bad for business, it dampens the passion for the work that got you into this field in the first place.”

From that lunch came a new business idea: a firm that provides outsourced admin services done by experienced support staff at an affordable cost. Complita and Tarabochia were surprised to learn that, while many such options exist for lawyers, doctors, and even computer programmers, none were focused on serving the needs of the A/E/C community.

A/E/C SPECIFIC

“Even in the best of times, finding admin support that works is tough for small AEC firms,” Complita says. “You want an experienced professional but probably only need them part-time and can’t offer the salary larger firms can. That’s a hard position to fill.” He says SeeSaw was just getting on its feet when the pandemic hit. The “new normal” we’re all operating under these days significantly affected the business in ways that couldn’t have been predicted.

“Just before the pandemic, we were talking with a number of prospective clients who were hesitant because they couldn’t envision how this would work without the in-person, face-to-face interaction they were accustomed to,” he says. “But people have seen that it’s actually easy to engage and communicate remotely. So they’ve come back to us and said, ‘OK, we’re ready now.’”

And while the work may not have the glamor of design or the excitement of being on a job site, Complita finds it gratifying.

“By handling these admin duties, we’re taking some of the burden off these folks,” he says. “It gives them a chance to do the work they love. Some are even able to hire new design staff. It feels great to be a part of their growth in some small way.” ●

ASK THE EXPERTS

QUESTION:

What tool is available for A/E/C Project Managers to decide which projects to go after and decide what information is needed to win a project?

ANSWER:

PSMJ's Go/No-Go tool is a FREE, web-based app that makes go/no-go decisions as easy as a few clicks. Based on decades of A/E/C business development experience, this tool covers all the key areas that you must evaluate before committing resources to a new project opportunity.

“The main benefit of this tool (which isn't obvious from its name) is that it not only helps you decide which projects to chase but also helps you identify the information you need to win the ones you decide to chase,” explains Dave Burstein, P.E., AECPM. And, you can save and share project opportunities so that your entire pursuit team is on the same page.

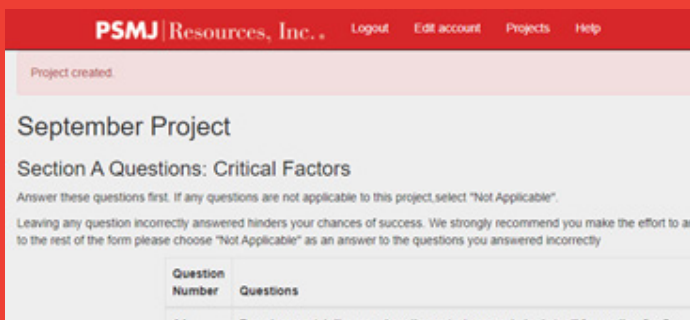
The tool is as simple to use as:

- Visit: http://app.psmj.com/users/sign_in
- Click “Sign Up” or if you have used it before, “Log in”
- Select “Create New Project” (button at the right side of your screen)
- Enter a project name and you are good to go

You will then provide answers to the critical factor questions—and receive immediate feedback indicating whether the project meets or satisfies the stated criteria. But you can further evaluate the opportunity by providing answers about additional factors. The tool will provide a Go/No-Go score and recommendations as to how you should proceed on this project opportunity.

With this tool you will be able to:

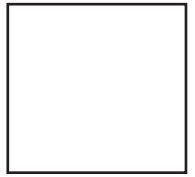
- View your projects
- Print your Go/No-Go analysis
- Add new projects at any time to your project dashboard



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ASK THE EXPERTS

Every new direction comes with questions—**LOTS OF QUESTIONS**. Members of PSMJ need to get answers to their most pressing consulting questions, and now you can (up to once per quarter) ask a consultant a question regarding managing an A/E firm today.

Email your questions (please, no request for specific PSMJ data) to cecere@psmj.com and get expert guidance most often within 48 hours.

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