

PROFILES IN CONSTRUCTION & DESIGN

10-year-old firm finds success in staying positive

By TIM MORAN

It's been almost ten years to the day since Gary Berman, Steve Tell and Rick Fennema started Greyhawk, their very own construction management and consulting firm. While the principals behind the founding of Greyhawk—such as their goal to “eliminate negative thinking” on projects—have not changed, one important aspect, thankfully, has: they have clients.

Founded on a wing and a prayer, and conceived of by Tell and Berman at the Roxy Delicatessen, Greyhawk has now grown to a multi-faceted construction management and consulting firm with about 100 employees working out of eight offices around

the globe.

So what's helped Greyhawk grow in a tough industry?

“We're really good listeners and I don't think a lot of companies are,” said Janet Snyder, director of corporate development for Greyhawk. “And we really, honestly do work as a team. We leverage each other's expertise so we can fashion a program custom to fit the needs of the client.”

This coordination ahs helped the firm branch out not only geographically—with offices as far away as Houston, Texas, and England—but also in its services and areas of expertise. Greyhawk has specialists in k-12 education construction management, high-education construction management and healthcare construction

management, as well as in other fields. Snyder said Greyhawk employees' knowledge in specialized fields such as healthcare construction helps them take care of potential construction disputes before they arise.

“Sometimes we advise [clients] prior to a project getting underway,” she said. “We take steps that tell them how to avoid some of the more common pitfalls.”

In addition, Greyhawk adheres to 10 rules that they say make for a successful project. First among these: “Eliminate negative thinking and the ‘no’ word from your vocabulary. Find reasons how to make things work rather than finding reasons why they won't.”

Another: “Learn about and get in-

involved in problems early. Be proactive and provide value. Do not be afraid of delivering bad news - communication is essential.”

Snyder said communication proves easy at Greyhawk because the employees truly enjoy their work.

“We're like a big family here in a true sense. It's not like anywhere else I've worked,” she said. “That motivates us... We all really enjoy finding solutions to the problems presented to us.”

Of course the employees at Greyhawk have good reason to go the extra mile and find solutions to complex construction problems.

“We're 100% employee owned, so we know whenever we help the firm, we're helping ourselves,” Snyder said.