

Scale & Perspective

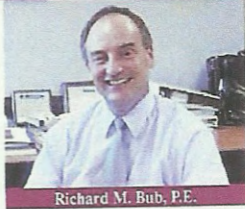
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Graef Anhalt Schloemer & Associates, Inc., is dedicated to serving public and private clients.

Our ability to excel is driven by Integrity, Quality, and our Commitment to Customer Service.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Richard M. Bub, P.E.

Hear that? It's opportunity knocking.

A friend recently told me this story:

Every day, the employees of a printing company would go to lunch at a restaurant several miles away. One day a sign went up on the undeveloped lot on the corner. A new restaurant would be opening soon.

This was great news. It would be nearby. The employees wouldn't have to spend their lunch hours driving. Word spread quickly through the office and everyone looked forward to the grand opening.

But one employee saw something more. He saw an opportunity.

That restaurant would need some of the very services his company provided: menus, flyers, and advertising. He wasn't a salesman. In fact, he actually had little contact with the public. But when he got back to the office, he made sure to pass the information to the sales department.

That mindset is becoming increasingly important in today's economy. With the level of competition that exists today, it's vital to remember that we are all part of business development. We are all part of the marketing team.

At Graef Anhalt Schloemer & Associates, we strive to ensure that the lines of communication always remain open so that information can flow freely. Being able to see the opportunities others haven't, getting that information to the right people, and seizing the initiative gives us another edge over our competition.

The restaurant I mentioned will need menus and flyers. They will need advertising. Someone will step up to fill that need. With all of the people who drove by that site, only

one person was prepared to see it for the opportunity it presented. If he shares that information with his sales department, his company may get the job before the competition even realizes it existed.

Sometimes, when opportunity knocks, it knocks softly and we have to be listening carefully to hear it.

In the course of the day, we interact with many people. We may hear of leads for new projects that we should act on immediately. By working closely with our clients, we may become aware of changing industry trends that can help us in long-term, strategic planning. We need to listen with a business-ear and to share that information with each other.

Collectively, we are the eyes and ears of GAS.

Individually, we journey into the world. We join associations; we attend seminars; we go to school board and city council meetings. We read newspapers, play golf, and go fishing. We live our lives.

As we do so, we need to ask ourselves if we are open to the possibilities that present themselves. Are we listening for that soft knocking of opportunity when mention is made at a school board meeting of the need for a new facility, or when a golfing acquaintance remarks that his company has outgrown its present building?

Remembering that we are all part of the marketing effort makes spotting those opportunities easier. Many companies forget that and they lose their competitive edge.

I'm sure we've all had the experience of going to a store and being put off by the clerk's attitude or lack of responsiveness to our needs. Less frequent perhaps, but certainly more pleasant, are those occasions when we go to the store and the clerk remembers our names, helps us find what we're looking for, and is willing to go that extra mile to ensure our satisfaction.

Neither you nor the clerk may see it for what it is at the moment, but that's business development. You'll return to that store. You'll gladly recommend it to others. You have just become part of that store's marketing effort.

In a similar way, that's how we market GAS. We – our work, our standards – the very things that make us the best in our field – are our own best marketing tools.

These standards are key to our success: We are responsive to our clients' needs. We give our best efforts every time, all the time. We grasp the demands and fulfill every requirement of a project, on time and within budget. We do our best to offer innovative, effective solutions and answers in a timely and efficient manner and it shows in the feedback we receive from our clients.

The letters we receive each year commending GAS staff speak volumes about our responsiveness and attentiveness. Those letters represent more than just a job well done. They represent a customer whose trust we have earned. What better marketing tool is there than a truly satisfied customer?

We produce the highest quality work. We will continue to seek challenging projects and put forth our best in every project we assume, large and small. The awards, recognition, and reception our work has received across the globe speak strongly and loudly, not just for what we have done, but also for what we can do.

Our work is a testament to our abilities.

We will continue to maintain our high standards and expand our capabilities. And, as we do so, we'll keep one ear tuned for the soft knocking of opportunity – wherever that may be.

Sincerely,
Richard M. Bub P.E.
President