

## The Double-Edged Sword of Marketing Expectations

### Features



#### Readers' Choice Awards for 2022

Readers of Metal Architecture selected Petersen Aluminum Corp's Precision Series.

<https://www.metalarchitecture.com/articles/readers-choice-awards-for-2022>



#### One-of-a-Kind Rustic Designs

With its rustic appearance, weathering steel has become a popular.

<https://www.metalarchitecture.com/articles/one-of-a-kind-rustic-designs>



#### Grand Bridge

Perched on a high bluff at the confluence of Puget.

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#### Box-rib Metal Panels Wrap House on Hillside

Zig zagging down a hillside in Carrboro, N.C., a black-clad.

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#### MA Digital Edition

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As a consultant I hear it all: both sides, he said she said, finger pointing, gripes, complaints. Sometimes it feels like all I hear is fix this, correct that. Rarely, do people take responsibility for themselves. More often the game plays out as principals versus 'that marketing department.' Perhaps there's a place for clarification of expectations, abilities and accountabilities.



Principals might say, 'Marketing doesn't know our projects, they miss deadlines, and can't write for beans.' Marketing often says, 'Principals don't pass on RFPs until the day before. They don't give quality input. They don't treat marketing personnel with respect.' Graphic designers complain constantly about the principals' lack of understanding with regard to technical skill sets and the time required to produce perfect results. Both sides may have legitimate reasons to feel frustrated but in the long run it usually comes down to management setting the right goals and expectations. How a firm's culture performs originates from the top. It may develop over time into a flat playing field, but the initial model depends on leaders with their own particular vision.

Let's begin with fair expectations. Hiring can lead to success or failure. Each side has responsibilities right from the start. Principals must have a well thought out job description that goes beyond simple vague words like: write proposals, design brochures. Perhaps add, 'Must understand and excel at the nuances between various submissions, always use proper grammar, and spell everything correctly. Must show flexibility with design and be an award-winning graphic designer. Knowing InDesign inside and out goes without saying. Provide samples of published written articles. Maintains charts for ROI (return on investment) of various submittals, awards won/lost, social media results etc.' Before the written description gets placed in an ad, a meeting of the minds between the principals should confirm who will take responsibility for follow through and check off boxes to be

will take responsibility for follow through and check after hiring to be sure the marketing person really does have the capability to accomplish the stated responsibilities. If not, then they should be fired immediately. False promises during an interview rarely lead to a satisfactory result.

Professionals have choices. Work with people with barely above average intelligence with a minor college education, who doesn't speak, or dress, or have a world view similar to themselves, and the schism between the cultures will inevitably clash. It's too late to complain about the persons' inadequacies after they're hired as though some miracle transformation should occur the moment they

begin working at the firm. Hire right and spend the cash to enable swift communication and a subliminal almost intuitive understanding that comes from innate talent combined with a great education. Intelligence and capability includes the self-taught and I don't ever mean to imply that only the top 10 university graduates should be considered. Also, diversity in the workplace brings about exciting new ideas and creative advances. Still, the internal culture has to be able to embrace these cultural differences. Ultimately careful screening beforehand can save a multitude of headaches later.

If the marketing person hired is polite, bright and up for any challenge, and they're subjected to prima donnas who have little regard for anyone who is not a professional, then this misalignment will lead to a myriad of retaliatory behaviors from the marketing side or if the person's really smart, she'll just quit. A truly respectful culture does not permit poor business practices. Nor does it engage in disrespectful etiquette during meetings. A responsible culture holds meetings without swearing, constant side talking, checking e-mails on cellphones, tardiness or being unprepared. Leaders should set examples and the above list of rude behaviors verges on the edge of abuse. Department heads must also be able to make fast decisions and respond in a timely manner. All of these actions provide the road map a new hire can emulate to feel comfortable working inside of a firm.

Leadership also has the right to expect a fair day's work from the marketing staff. Excessive socializing, lack of ownership, inability to communicate the firm's goals and vision combined with poor results or missed deadlines should not be permitted. Disgruntled employees or below standard performers should be removed immediately. As the old saying goes: one rotten apple can spoil the entire barrel. Studies have shown that when destructive or inadequate work product occurs its affects spread through a company like an infectious disease.

Many psychological issues come into play for a marketing department to become dysfunctional. Without clear guidelines and ways to measure accountability, or poorly run reviews with no 360s, and without a well-trained human resource department things can fall apart fairly quickly-on both sides.

It's amazing how well teams work together when a small amount of up-front work gets done to insure the right person gets hired for the job. When the company monitors its etiquette and treatment of all employees, when proper expectations for everyone's responsibilities are clearly spelled out and managed well, and when work product gets verified for the proper results and praised for a job well done, there are no more incidents of finger pointing. Companies that win the best place to work awards understand the importance of getting the mix right. When people spend 80 percent of their time at work it needs to be pleasurable. The trick to achieving happiness starts with truly knowing your company and what makes everyone feel like a well-oiled machine.

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