



Unless Commitment is Made,  
there are only Promises and Hopes; but no Plans

## **COMMITMENT IS THE GLUE FOR SUCCESS**

by Thomas H Walker, MBA, Sr. Vice President

During the interviewing process, you will probably hear Architectural and General Contractor firms defend their delivery system by warning you that the Design/Build Full Service Delivery System is like “putting all your eggs in one basket.” The reason they make this claim is that the A/GC system creates a strict separation of responsibilities between the key principle players. On the other hand, the D/B system creates a team mentality among the key principle partners. The A/GC system sees the design and construction as separate processes. The D/B sees it as one process. When you look deeper into their statement, they are actually saying, “You don’t want a team working together but working separately; also, you want limited commitments from the A/GC in case you need to end the relationship.”

When you sign a contract with a stand-alone Architect, you thereby limit the involvement of the Architect. When the Architect is done with design, you will sign another contract with a General Contractor who will then sign multiple contracts with sub-contractors. The church is convinced that signing multiple contracts with the Architect and General Contractor reduces the risk. However, what you have really done is to reduce the level of commitment from the key principles, because their responsibilities are confined to specialized areas of the project. This creates tunnel vision as opposed to a total project understanding.

The church is convinced that by separating the principle players, it will avoid “having the fox watch the hen house.” In addition, with the firms working on limited terms “in office,” there is never time to form a cohesive bond among all parties. Again, this working environment creates a division of responsibilities among the principle players in each discipline, triggering negative influences on your building project schedule and the final project cost. Some negative consequences are finger pointing and adversarial relationships. F.W. Dodge states that 70% of building projects go over budget by 30% to 50% and the main reason for this is due to separation. Church leaders need to read the Architect’s AIA agreement, as well as the GC contract with a very critical eye. These contracts place the majority of the risk with the owner.

A Full Service Design / Build company encourages commitment and does so without apologies. Every ministry that decides to expand their facilities to grow God’s kingdom is entering into a spiritual battle. The Design / Build process focuses on building a dedicated team of professionals that work with the Church’s Building Committee. Building a team first is the only way to create a united and committed front line of defense. In every endeavor, the degree of success and victory is in direct correlation to the level of commitment in the team members. Commitment is the glue for success.