

# Sightings

A publication of



The Longview Group, LLC

January 2008 Vol. 6, No. 1

## UPCOMING SEMINARS

Longview Group and the Society for Marketing Professional Services announce a NEW national seminar:

**Recruit and Retain Great A/E/C Talent: The Business Development Approach**

**January 23, 2008  
Columbus, OH**

in association with ACEC Ohio

**Boston, MA  
February 15, 2008**

**Philadelphia, PA  
March 28, 2008**

**Tampa, FL  
April 25, 2008**

**Chicago, IL  
May 30, 2008**

**Essentials & Proposals  
Attend just one day or both**

DAY 1 - A/E/C Essentials: An Introduction to the Design and Construction Industry  
DAY 2 - Powerful Persuasive Proposals

**Houston, TX  
February 7 & 8, 2008**

For more information, go to:  
[www.longview-group.com/seminars.html](http://www.longview-group.com/seminars.html)



## The Parallels Between Keeping Employees and Clients

by Dennis Schrag

Your competitors are tougher than ever . . . and they are coveting your employees AND your clients! Retaining your firm's talent is very similar to keeping your clients. The processes are unbelievably parallel. It's not automatic and it's not easy.

Profitable service businesses know that there are only two significant assets . . . your employees and your clients. The way you win, retain and sustain clients and employees is very similar. You can't have one without the other. Retaining clients and retaining talent are both critical. Both clients and employees:

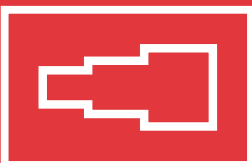
- Provide profits
- Are time consuming
- Are hard to acquire (and getting harder)
- Require ongoing maintenance
- Must be managed

There are significant pressures in the marketplace for both employees and clients. On the employee side, the aging of the Baby Boomers and the 50 percent reduction in Gen-Xers to replace those leaving the job pool causes a significant shortage of skilled and technical talent. Add to that shortage, the

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worldwide demand for technical employees. More stringent visa and work-permit regulations confound the shortage. The Gen-Xers want “a life” outside of work. So they strongly prefer a set work schedule that balances work and life. That is a big difference from the boomers who were willing to work long hours as needed. Bottom line: getting talent is tough now and will become even tougher.

Smart employers know how critical it is to retain employees. Just like securing strategic clients, the cost of securing strategic employees is a long, slow and expensive process. Once you have them, you need to keep them . . . both employees and clients.

Employee retention and client retention are not automatic. Retaining each requires smart management, knowledge of what each wants, and a written plan that is executed.

For many years managers worked hard at keeping the top 10 percent of their employees. These “A” players, just like the top 10 percent of your clients, are demanding and fickle. Both ask frequently, “What have you done for me lately?” Many organizations know that these prize winners will move up and move on. In the past we have invested considerable time and energy winning and keeping these elite clients and employees.

We oftentimes ignored or took for granted that vast middle group of employees and clients. These “B” players are the bread and butter of our workforce and our client base. They are dependable, agile, and provide the bulk of our profits. Smart firms have figured out that retaining “B” employees and “B” clients makes great economic

sense. Do you have one senior manager who is responsible for retention of key clients? Do you have one senior manager who is responsible for retaining these key employees?

I have created a Client Retention form and an Employee Retention form. You can download them and adjust them to fit your business at <http://www.longview-group.com/downloads.html>

All in all, keeping clients and employees is about communications. Listening to what they want and need and making a good faith effort pays off. Clients and employees leave because they feel unappreciated. Pure and simple.

In the book *Lessons in Loyalty*, Lorraine Grubbs West details how Southwest

Airlines understands and acts to attract and keep quality customers and employees. In a nutshell, West explains how Southwest:

- Makes retention a priority
- Creates and sustains a culture of “nice”
- Knows that people give as good as they get
- Finds the “kid” in everyone - clients and employees
- Measures everything to see how it is doing. You can manage only that which you measure.

There are clear parallels between retaining clients and employees. And for both, it is planning and execution that makes the difference.



## WHAT IS THE LONGVIEW GROUP, LLC?

Seeking more efficiency and effectiveness in your professional service business? The Longview Group, LLC provides you INSIGHTS through training, on-the-job coaching, expert counsel, and extra-hands services.



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