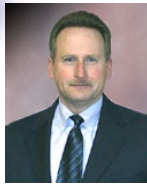


Hesitation In The Signing Of Contracts
For Church Building Programs



THE CHURCH BUILDING PEOPLE



by

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After the interviewing process and the selection of a firm has been agreed upon, the next step is to requisition a contract from the firm. It is assumed that the review and signing of the contract would be the next logical step. However, for some churches this becomes one of the greatest hurdles to overcome. Why? A building program is a huge undertaking for any church. The signing of a contract, either with a Church Architect or a Church Design/Builder, involves a commitment to move ahead with this huge undertaking. There are many reasons why the signing of contracts to begin church building programs comes to a grinding halt. Here are just a few of them:

First, there are church leaders who are unsure of their own long-range commitment to a church building program. These people have a tendency at this stage of the game to use all kinds of delaying tactics to delay or avoid committing the church to this critical step of hiring a firm to start the building program. In these instances the other members of the building committee needs to recognize that this personal commitment is a problem and replace those members unwilling to commit to the time commitment for the church building program with members who are willing to do so.

Then, there are church leaders who do not want to commit their fellow congregational members to the expense of the large sums of money (such as for architectural fees) necessary to get ready for a church building program. They are looking at the risk that the church may lose this money if the project fails to move ahead for one reason or another. These types of church leaders usually have not been convinced that proper planning has been completed, and that failure is not in the mindset of any church leader.

If proper planning has been done wherein the space needs of the church have been determined, the size and the scope of the project has been clearly defined, realistic cost estimates have been applied for the size and scope of the project, and the financial capabilities/affordability of the church have been established insuring that the project will not get in financial jeopardy, then a revisiting of the planning process with any unsure church leaders may help alleviate their fears of a failed church building program.

Another way to allay the fears of those church leaders afraid of committing large sums of money up front is to contract with a firm that doesn't require as much money up front to get to a point where your church has a positively "go" project.

There may also be church leaders who are not in total agreement with the other members of a building committee as to which firm is being selected to help lead the church through their building program. In these cases, the other building committee members need to recognize that the dissenting members have a hidden agenda for delaying or stopping the signing of a contract, and if these members are unwilling or unsure of their cooperation in working with the chosen firm, then for the good of the building program and the other committee members, they need to be replaced.

In conclusion, there are many other reasons for church leaders being unwilling to commit to the final act of signing their names to a contract to start a church building program. Whatever these reasons may be, it is important to realize that the end result is that the time and resources of the church's selection committee, as well as the travel, personnel and opportunity costs of the firms interviewed, have been lost and wasted away.