



Robinson Builders Mart

"Lumber, Building Material, Millwork & Hardware"

Customer Newsletter



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A Little More On Working With Subcontractors

1. Understand And Protect Your Surety Bonds. Yes, you know your firm has to be bonded in order to get projects. You even sort of understand how these bonds work. But what many people don't realize is that if a claim is successfully made against a bond (and a sub-contractor can certainly do this), a firm can be refused bonding for future projects. Since much general contractor/sub-contractor malaise often comes from misunderstandings over schedules and paperwork, effective subcontractor management entails making every effort to make sure contracts and other administrative details are understood and agreed upon by all parties *before* subcontractor work starts.

2. Treat Your Sub-Contractor As You Would Like To Be Treated. And you would presumably like to be paid on time, be told what is going on, and not treated like a cog in a machine, correct? Sub-contractor relations generally go better when a superintendent makes sure that all paperwork is in order, finds ways to avoid or minimize payment delays, and treats the sub-contractor like a genuine team member, instead of a temporary employee.

3. Get It In Writing First. A shocking number of general and sub-contractor firms begin work on a project *without* a written contract in place. If that relationship goes south, the result is often months of time and money lost as legal eagles try to determine if an "enforceable" contract exists. Contracts protect all parties, and should both be in place and completely understood by all of those parties before work begins. Avoid a sub-contractor who thinks a hand shake is sufficient to seal the deal, no matter how good their work.

4. Make sure you have and keep up with Proper Documentation. Meet often with your subs and write down every agreed upon change to original plan.