

SMALL BUSINESS EXCHANGE

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Construction Trends to Watch out for in 2020



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By Julia Chirichella,

A new decade has begun, and the next ten years are sure to bring advancements in the construction industry that we cannot even begin to imagine. On a smaller scale, trends that are already in the works are likely to evolve and become more common in 2020, and along with the emergence of new trends, these advancements will likely shape the construction industry and how it functions moving forward. Increases in efficiency, sustainability, safety, and more are on the horizon. Below are some construction trends to watch out for in 2020.

Green Construction Processes and Sustainability

Sustainability should be considered in all areas of life, and 2020 will likely see an increase in sustainable efforts in the construction industry. In order to complete major construction projects while conserving the environment at the same time, various steps can be taken. "Green construction" considers the impact of the work on our planet during each step of the construction process, from planning to execution. Sustainable construction efforts include switching to LED lighting wherever possible on construction sites,

as well as developing more effective thermal performance materials to use for buildings constructed in 2020. Green construction processes often allow for the construction of buildings that are both environmentally and economically friendly, which makes this trend appealing for both those who need structures built and those who are doing the building.

Modular Construction Projects

Trends in every industry often emerge due to the desire to make things simpler and more convenient, and this is evident in construction through the rise of modular construction methods. 2020 will likely bring about an increase in modular projects because they save time, money, and energy - office buildings, hotels, apartments, and more come to life through prefabricated pieces. Since the bulk of these buildings is assembled offsite, construction companies do not have to worry about the weather or other external factors that will significantly slow down the construction process. Waste is also reduced through this process because it allows for the easy recycling of unused materials. This process is ideal for repetitive structures and allows for the construction of these structures at a much faster rate.

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High-Speed Rail Authority Issues Draft 2020 Business Plan

The California High-Speed Rail Authority issued its Draft 2020 Business Plan on Wednesday for public review and comment, as the agency seeks to advance California's leadership in building a modern, clean and sustainable transportation system.

The Draft 2020 Business Plan affirms the policy recommendation to the Authority Board to develop a clean, electrified Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield high-speed rail interim service line in California's Central Valley with the funding currently available. The plan also outlines major program progress in all three regions of the state - Northern California, Central Valley and Southern California.

Notably, the Draft Business Plan estimates costs consistent with estimates contained within the 2018 Business Plan and 2019 Project Update Report.

"This plan outlines how this program will advance to meet California's mobility, environmental and economic objectives," said Authority CEO Brian Kelly. "We are in an exciting time for this project and the electrification of transportation in California. In 2020, there will be 350 miles of electrified high-speed rail in development. In the next 18 to 24 months, we will work to environmentally clear the full Phase 1 system between San Francisco and Los Angeles/Anaheim. This transformation is well underway in California. Now is not the time to turn back," Kelly said.

The 2020 Business plan outlines the following priorities:

- Complete the 119-mile Central Valley construction segment and lay track pursuant to our federal funding grant agreements with the Federal Railroad Administration;
- Expand the 119-mile Central Valley segment to 171 miles of operable electrified high-speed rail connecting Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield, three of the fastest-growing areas in California;
- Commence testing of electrified high-speed trains by 2025 and put those trains in service by 2028-29;
- Environmentally clear all segments of the Phase 1 system between San Francisco and Los Angeles/Anaheim in the next 18-24 months;
- Complete the "bookend" projects we have committed funding to in Los Angeles and the Bay Area—projects valued at more than \$3 billion;
- Pursue additional funding opportunities to prospectively "close the gaps" and expand electrified high-speed rail service to the Bay Area and Los Angeles/Anaheim.

The Authority is proposing to use the funds

available through 2030, projected to range from \$20.6 billion to \$23.3 billion, to:

- Deliver the Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield line
- Environmentally clear the full 520-mile Phase 1 system
- Complete the bookend investments in Northern and Southern California with its regional partners

In the Business Plan, the Authority has also included some notable achievements since the last business plan:

- More than 3,500 construction workers have been dispatched to work on the high-speed rail program in the Central Valley since the start of construction.
- There are currently more than 500 small businesses that have worked with high-speed rail, illustrating the Authority's commitment to have 30 percent of the project done by small business.
- From July 2006 to June 2019, investment of \$5.7 billion in planning and building, resulting in \$8.1 to \$9.2 billion in economic output.

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Business Toolkit

The Fundamental Home Office Setup Guide for Your Small Business

By Julie Morris,

If you own a home-based business, you need a dedicated workspace. A home office helps to create a physical and mental boundary between your work and home life, a necessity when the two exist under the same roof! This is essential for avoiding distractions and working efficiently. Establishing a home workspace will also help you control all of that work-related clutter that tends to pile up around your house. If your small business could use its own dedicated space, check the following tips to plan the perfect home office for your needs.

Making Space

First, carve out a physical space in your home for your new office. A guest bedroom, garage, or empty basement might work perfectly. You could even work out of a separate structure on your property, like a garden shed, as long as you're willing to invest in a few modifications—these structures typically lack windows and electrical hookups. Just make sure whatever space you find is large enough for your needs. Working out of different locations in your home is inefficient!

If your business has completely outgrown your home and you just can't find space for a comfortable office, it may be time to move. You can keep the home buying process as simple as possible by following important steps along the way. For example, Redfin recommends starting your housing search by calculating how much you can afford and getting pre-approved for a mortgage.

Determining Your Needs

Once you have found a room or building for your office, think about the equipment, furniture,

and storage solutions you need. If you spend most of your day at a computer, you will need a reliable internet connection, a good quality chair, and a simple desk. Ensure that your desk is large enough to hold papers and computer equipment without causing clutter chaos! If you will be meeting with clients, incorporate some professional décor and guest seating into your design plan. Business owners who build or craft products may have to include substantial storage space for supplies and tools.

Be careful to consider your workflow as you plan out your office layout. Position desks, tools, and storage solutions strategically to maximize your efficiency and reduce distractions. For example, ClutterBGone recommends creating a dedicated mail center, a printing space, and a file system for managing paper clutter.

Reducing Distractions

Household distractions are the enemy of every home-based business owner. When setting up your home office, pay special attention to sights and sounds that may be distracting. Can you hear the living room television from your office? Does your office window face a busy street? Will your children be tempted to visit you while you're working? Don't assume that you will be able to "tune out" distractions. Plan ahead to create a quiet and private workspace by choosing a room far away from regular household activity. Since smartphones and tablets can be a significant source of distractions, have a dedicated spot in your office to store these gadgets away from your desk.

Optimizing Lighting

Lighting is an essential element of any office environment. According to Us&Co, people tend to



Photo via Rawpixel

work best in natural light, so make sure you have windows in your home workspace. You may have to add windows to a garage or shed if you choose to work in one of these locations.

In addition to natural light, you can use different types of lighting to create a comfortable workspace that reduces eyestrain and headaches. Don't rely on general overhead lighting alone. Use task lighting for focused projects, like reading and writing, and accent lighting to soften your surroundings and make your office more inviting. This will give you control over the brightness and intensity of your lighting so

you can adjust your work environment as needed throughout your day.

Running a home-based business is no easy task. To keep your business moving forward, design a distraction-free workspace where you can focus easily and access everything you need right at your fingertips. Take the time to plan out your office design to ensure your new workspace is conducive to comfort and productivity.

WEBSITE: <http://juliemorris.org/>

Executives Impart 'What it Takes' to Lead in Today's Business Landscape

By Merilee Kern, MBA

It's fairly indisputable that a prospering company or organization wouldn't be enjoying any notable measure of success without highly effective leadership. Potent leadership is, in fact, often a primary driver of business innovation, development and growth overall.

Commanding a team, department or company at-large isn't (or shouldn't be) about the prestige, accolades, lofty titles or that sweet corner suite. Rather, genuine leaders are able to establish and sustain a mindset that profoundly resonates with the masses—one that galvanizes committees, groups, companies, and organizations in a common mission. Of course, there's isn't a one-size-fits-all leadership style that every CEO "must" adopt. In fact, much is learned by trial-and-error throughout a leader's oft jagged trajectory to the top.

Successful leaders certainly can—and should—play to their innate strengths and abilities. However, those that go over-and-above to recognize and

parlay those of key stakeholders, recognizing (and being willing to admit) their own abilities aren't enough, often exceed achievement expectations. To do this effectively, a leader must maintain an uber-awareness of the human resource assets at hand.

Towards this end, it's imperative for leaders to identify their superstar players across all departments while also staying in-tune with the proverbial "pulse" of their workforce overall. But this is easier said than done amid a widening gap among the c-suite and "everyone else" that's sure to make doing so a bit more complex. A recent Forbes online article cited that "an important challenge facing US leaders in 2020 is the growing generation gap in attitudes and capabilities between themselves and workers soon to be entering the labor market," as asserted by Rob Anthony—a professor of management at the Boston campus of Hult International Business School. This Forbes article also offered results of a study conducted by organizational advisory firm Korn Ferry, which put "the average age for CEOs at 58, chief HR officers

at 55 and CFOs at 53. At the other end of the spectrum, the post-millennial Generation Z will start to turn 23 and soon command the largest share of the US labor force."

Relative to mindsets, this widening age gap will also surely breed emotional rifts that can further alienate an inflexible or stubborn c-suite. Another Forbes online article underscored the importance of leaders ensuring every employee understands their organization's purpose. This Forbes report noted that, "in the past, most employees focused on their paychecks and job titles. Times have changed. Purpose matters more than ever before. Individuals who have a clear sense of purpose are more likely to stick around and love their jobs." This particular article also cited a study (registration required) finding that "nine out of ten workers were willing to make less money to do more meaningful work." So, a leader with his or her ear to the ground, with a keen understanding of what will motivate a team, can be a make or break differential.

With the modern business landscape changing so profoundly, I connected with a few business leaders who are known for being particularly progressive for some perspective. Below they share some philosophies on "what it takes" to lead in this competitive and transformative new decade.

Nimble, Organized and Ready

Leadership requires influencing others to accomplish the company's mission, and a key is to provide employees with adequate tools to be flexible, organized and purpose-driven. This is according to Ken Thompson of AlignOrg, who believes that experienced leaders curate great and well-equipped teams through strategic planning, organizational design and change management.

"Organizations today don't have the luxury of stability since they're an ever-increasing change in markets, customers, and technology," Thompson notes. "Organizations who are ready for this change, who are organized enough to respond to these changes and who can operate as a tight co-

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Public Legal Notices



SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

NOTICE TO PROSPECTIVE PROPOSERS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
CAS FILE NO. 5096

On-Call Water Quality Technical Services

Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to provide engineering consultation services for regulatory, operational, technical and training support assignments for the On-Call Water Quality Technical Services Project. Parties interested in obtaining a copy of this RFP may do so by accessing the Valley Water's web portal at <http://cas.valleywater.org/>. All parties are asked to register on the Contract Administration System (CAS), to be automatically notified of any changes to the RFP document. Proposals are due by 2:00 p.m. on March 20, 2020 as specified in the RFP Schedule. All questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted by email to Helen Hoang at hhoang@valleywater.org no later than the date specified in the RFP Schedule.



SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

NOTICE TO PROSPECTIVE PROPOSERS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
CAS FILE NO. 5095

On-Call Third Party Internal Auditor

Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) is seeking proposals from qualified audit and advisory firms to provide recommendations for continual improvement and conduct audits to ensure Valley Water is in compliance with its policies, procedures, and regulations for the On-Call Third Party Internal Auditor Project. Parties interested in obtaining a copy of this RFP may do so by accessing the Valley Water's web portal at <http://cas.valleywater.org/>. All parties are asked to register on the Contract Administration System (CAS), to be automatically notified of any changes to the RFP document. Proposals are due by 2:00 p.m. on March 24, 2020 as specified in the RFP Schedule. All questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted by email to Cathy Hoang at choang@valleywater.org no later than the date specified in the RFP Schedule.



Executives Impart 'What it Takes' to Lead in Today's Business Landscape

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hesive unit will not only better survive seismic shifts in the market, but also actually thrive in the face of such profound competition and other evolution.

Leaders are Activists

In our brave new world of rapid change and complexity, there is no single person who can really direct an intricate business. A lone individual can only encourage those involved to think differently, which is a key argument as to why leaders can be considered activists. This is particularly true for those who promote change and coordinate the efforts of others to help them achieve goals without actually "controlling" them.

Chris Stewart, CEO of brightbeam, is a deep-rooted leader, activist and 20-year supporter of charitable and education-related causes. As a parent himself, Chris leads brightbeam's network of education activists under a single mission: to demand better education and a brighter future for every child.

When asked how he gained such a powerful voice fighting for the educational opportunities of all children, Stewart remarked, "It's because 29 years ago, when I had my first child, I became a parent with a problem. I didn't have a great education myself and I didn't have many resources. But, I had a kid that I loved and I was determined to give him a better life than what I had."

Today, Stewart fights to provide millions of families with the tools, knowledge, skills and confidence to fight for their own children's ability to receive a quality education. As far as Stewart is concerned, the future of education in this country shouldn't be grounded in empowering parents, but rather by putting them in power.

Stewart upholds that same premise when it comes to leading his organization, which he does through a distributive leadership model. "If leadership provides direction, it should come from many where the collective wisdom prevails, rather than just one dictatorial voice," Stewart says. This mindset led Stewart to establish a chief leadership team at brightbeam. "Operationally, of course, it was important to have a group of smart, influential individuals leading the work of the organization, but it was also important for external stakeholders to recognize the power of a strong bench," Stewart notes. "I am attempting to change the world. That's a big mission and I can only achieve it by building relationships with top-notch people."

To lead today, in a world where there is an abundance of passionate, talented people who want to make a difference, Stewart knows he doesn't have to be the smartest person in the room just because he holds the title of CEO.

A Winning Leaders Key to Success

Andrew Wyatt, head coach at Andrew Wyatt Leadership, LLC, acknowledges that the modern business landscape has clearly shifted but also notes that, as the saying goes, "the more things change, the more they remain the same." That is why he feels it's vital for a leader to avoid focusing on trends or on sentiment that are ever-changing and instead focus on principles, which

largely remain constant. This, he asserts, is the foundation of winning leadership.

According to Wyatt, winning leadership requires a ruthless application of one key leadership principle in particular: that effective leaders guide from the inside-out. Meaning, before any leader can successfully lead others, one must lead them self. Wyatt offers these three ways to accomplish this: 1) establish your credibility, 2) build your following and 3) lead with impact. And, the order of execution is apparently vital.

Here's Wyatt's advice:

Like building a skyscraper, leadership first requires excavation before elevation. This is how one establishes credibility. It starts with an inward look. The leader must know the truth before taking the next step to build a following. People follow truth, and most have a natural ability to discern it.

Building a following requires the leader to look outward to draw followers inward. This is the principle of servant leadership through which a leader must "engage" their followers in order to build a genuine and certainly impassioned following in return.

Finally, to lead with impact, the leader will need to be not only engaged but also current and relevant, able to adapt to the changing landscape without compromising the truth. Winning leadership understands and employs this cyclical process.

Customer Speed

Hari Abburi is a transformative thinker and leader who believes in centering leadership "at the speed of the customer." This is a non-ego-driven approach that directly concentrates on what a customer is thinking and experiencing in the present. "When leaders stay focused on anticipating customer needs and keeping their teams' customer-centric, a better product or service is produced," he says.

In this chase to understand how customers transfer their experiences from an unrelated situation on to a company, Abburi views leadership narrowing down to a few critical elements: curiosity, visual thinking, ability to articulate a clear purpose, using design as a key principle for everything done does and simplicity of execution.

"I have worked and lived in several countries and with responsibilities for over 50 countries and have seen patterns emerge, notes Abburi. "Curiosity and imagination are two universal key elements shared by leaders across cultures, ethnicities and industries. Curiosity is the best attribute a leader can have, as it drives the kind of imagination that solves problems and spurs innovation."

Pursuing New Markets

Great leaders throughout history are known for not shying away from new processes, technologies and, most importantly, new markets. Instead, they have an inherent ability to "see" emerging trends that others do not. Not only that, they take action to collaborate with key creative partners to realize early-stage success in these newly emerging sectors.

Orna Azulay did just that. As founder and president of Abington Speech Pathology Services, Inc. and the RemoteSpeech.com teletherapy

platform, she significantly expanded the reach of her company—now a global powerhouse—by approaching an existing therapy protocol in a new and more effective way.

An experienced business development professional, when Orna opened the business 20 years ago, she saw a business opportunity in a big HMO provider who was looking to have relationships with satellite clinics. Although speech teletherapy was still a new idea in the market compared to traditional therapy, Azulay knew the potential and convinced more clients to share her vision and come on board.

Filling in gaps is how great leaders realize great businesses. Thinking outside the box, trying new things even amid naysayers and trying to fulfill that empty niche in sustainable and scalable ways can catapult one's company to incredible heights.

It's a Marathon, Not a Sprint

Great leadership is an art that requires a combination of several skills and qualities to be successful. Castle Negotiations CEO Ruth Shlossman urges the importance of thinking long-term as a leader. "Developing a ten-year plan to withstand any expected or unexpected circumstances is how great leaders stay afloat," Shlossman says. "Keeping the bigger picture in mind will help create a culture that believes, plans and aptly executes."

Now that we are entrenched in a fresh new decade, it's a great time to recalibrate your leadership approach to be one that's more aware, sensitive and adaptive to those inevitable threats, weaknesses, trials, and tribulations. Being an agile, opportunistic, customer-centric and activist-oriented leader with planning prowess makes the difference between realizing success versus true greatness.

As the Executive Editor and Producer of "The Luxe List," Merilee Kern, MBA is an internationally-regarded brand analyst, strategist and futurist. As a prolific branding and marketplace trends pundit, Merilee spotlights noteworthy industry innovators, change makers, movers and shakers. This includes field experts and thought leaders, brands, products, services, destinations and events across all categories. Connect with her at www.TheLuxeList.com / Instagram www.instagram.com/LuxeListReports/ Twitter [www.twitter.com/LuxeListReports/](https://twitter.com/LuxeListReports/) Facebook www.facebook.com/LuxeListReports/ / LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/MerileeKern.

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