

# • Convention Report

## AIA Small Project Forum

# PIA

### Ready, Aim, Talk Architecture

*Presented by Susan Murphy, Murphy  
Motivation Inc., Edgewater, N.J.*

*Session S09; Thursday, May 4, 2000  
1:45–3:15 p.m.*

#### Strategic Speaking—Making the Most of Your Presentations

##### Objectives

- Define and practice strategic presentations
- Discover how to identify your client's specific interest
- Learn and practice the fundamentals of dynamic speaking
- Learn how to coach yourself and your colleagues.

The goal is to develop a communication style that moves beyond your own comfort and serves the selected purpose. *Common sense*, *good manners*, and *discipline* are the basics of a good communicator.

#### Communication Tools

##### Brain

**Common Sense**—Determine the direction of the presentation before you present.

**Good Manners**—Put the other person's agenda at the forefront.

**Discipline**—Take the time and energy to prepare.

Focus on the details the client values; if you don't know the answer, find it out. Outline your ideas and solutions. Give evidence that your approach works and that it matches their point of view.

##### Eyes

**Common Sense**—Eye to eye interaction reduces nervousness and establishes authority and sincerity.

**Good Manners**—Do not disregard the receiver by looking elsewhere.

**Discipline**—Break the lifelong habit of scanning from person to person.

It takes five seconds to convey a thought to a person. Pause between thoughts to collect the next thought. Concentrate on talking to a person rather than to an audience. When searching for words, looking down looks thoughtful. If you stumble, tell them you are searching for a thought. They understand this.

##### Mouth

**Common Sense**—Humans are sensitive to change; lack of change equals sleep.



## AIA

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Good Manners—Be interesting to the listener.

Discipline—Be aware of your vocal energy and project it.

Draw pictures with your voice using inflection and emotion. Speak louder than necessary in order to be heard.

### **Hands**

Common Sense—Gestures create interest and emphasis.

Good Manners—Be elegant. Do not display nervous habits.

Discipline—Practice motion with your arms and hands.

Pick five gestures and use them.

Gestures should be smooth, above the waist, and larger than life. Elongate your gestures: hold them for a moment.

### **Feet**

Common Sense—Stand firm. Sloppy or casual stance suggests lack of importance.

Good Manners—Maintain good posture.

Discipline—Limit unnecessary motion.

Limit your movement to above the waist and toward those to whom you are presenting. Keep your weight evenly balanced. Point your toes forward. It is hard to maintain eye contact if you are wandering around.

### **When answering questions...**

- Use a nod and a hand gesture to select the questioner
- Listen very carefully
- Repeat and rephrase the question

- Tie the answer to your visual presentation
- Use eye to eye contact to communicate the answer to various individuals, not just to the questioner.

Practice by using a video recording if possible. Establish a baseline. Become aware of your eyes, gestures, motion, and voice. Drop your hands and arms to your side. Practice balancing your weight when waiting in line or visiting at gatherings.

*Laura Lee Russell, AIA  
AIA Oklahoma City*

## **Marketing for the Small and Medium Sized Firm**

*Presented by Carolyn Ferguson,  
The Lentz Group, Houston*

*Session S21; Thursday, May 4, 2000  
2:00–3:30 p.m.*

I attended this seminar with great anticipation due to the response that it received after the 1999 convention. The information, however, proved to be more basic than I thought useful for the average, small architecture firm. Ms. Ferguson identified 10 rules for marketing architectural services. I have tried to briefly summarize these rules below.

### **1. Develop Clients Instead of Chasing Projects**

Repeat clients offer more revenue. Share with your clients all the services you offer—many times they don't know all that you can do.

### **2. Eat Your Way to a Job**

Try meeting with prospective clients over a power breakfast, a light lunch, or dinners and gala

events—get to know the client outside the office.

### **3. Gently Apply a Personal Touch**

Send personalized, handwritten thank you notes. Send small, personal gifts and birthday cards.

### **4. Share in Your Clients' Causes**

Research their interests in civic and charitable activities and also get involved.

### **5. Have Fun**

Sponsor an event like a pumpkin-carving contest, barbecue, or other activity; try to piggyback with other organizations' events.

### **6. Make Your Client a Star**

Try using awards and competitions in your chapter for the clients. Do joint speaking engagements and utilize your clients' expertise. Do press releases on new projects.

### **7. Talk to Your Clients about Them, Not about You**

Know your clients' interests and their business.

### **8. Just Ask**

Don't be afraid to ask your clients how you did. Use short surveys done by a third party (8 to 10 questions) to find out how you did or to find out who is planning upcoming projects. Use surveys to get feedback on proposals.

### **9. Network**

Join other organizations related to architecture or organizations that use architects (medical, educational, homebuilder, etc.).

### **10. Remember the Client All Year**

Send birthday cards. Conduct follow up walk-throughs to check building performance.

Ms. Ferguson also recommended that you use a Web site and keep it current. It probably should have a major overhaul every two to three years. Your Web site really should reflect your firm and be done as well as a brochure.

Last of all, written publications should be directed as much as possible toward a client or project. It is important to demonstrate that you understand the client.

*Jerald Morgan, AIA  
AIA Vancouver*

## Small Is Successful— How Emerging Services and Technologies Help Small Firms Compete

*Presented by Pradeep Dalal, Associate Director of Economics and Market Research, The American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.; Charles Matta, AIA, Matta Architect, Arlington, Va.*

*Session S80; Friday, May 5, 2000  
1:45–3:15 p.m.*

This session addressed the question “Can small firms succeed?” There are two main challenges. First, recent growth in the profession has resulted in more large firms and greater vulnerability to boom and bust cycles. Second, the percentage of small AIA firms (those firms with less than 10 people) has dropped over the past decade. In 1990, 86 percent of AIA firms had fewer than 10 people compared with 76 percent in 1999.

Small firms can be successful when they pay attention to the following criteria:

- How they get work—competitive versus noncompetitive selection
- The project mix—residential and institutional
- Diversified client types—private and public
- Services offered—expanded design services
- Opportunities to collaborate
- Technology—especially Web-based applications
- Marketing strategies.

Percentage of gross billings by source of work shows that one-person firms receive 90 percent of their work through noncompetitive selection compared to 57 percent noncompetitive selection when looking at firms of all sizes. It was also pointed out that smaller firms are underrepresented in institutional work—approximately 40 percent of billings are for residential projects. A balance of different projects is important, as boom/bust cycles vary between different facility types. Sole practitioners are doing more work for private individuals—35 percent of billings as compared with 10 percent across all firms. Small firms do much less work for other businesses, commercial/industrial clients, and the government.

While basic planning and predesign services form three-quarters of firms’ billings, there is significant billing in other categories as well. Small firms are doing ADA compliance, graphic design, information architecture, motion picture/video, and Web design.

### *Top expanded services offered by sole practitioners*

Photography, rendering, model making	44%
Interior design	44%
Space planning	41%
Landscape architecture	41%
Historic preservation	40%
Cost estimating	35%

Sole practitioners report that almost one-third of their billings are from sub work versus prime work, yet that is lower than the average across all firms. Additionally, billings from joint ventures are lower at small firms: two percent versus five percent for all firms.

Another fact pointed out during the presentation is that there was a big jump in the number of small firms with Web sites. From 1996 to 1999, the percentage of firms with Web sites went from 2 percent to 13 percent for sole practitioners, firms with 2 to 4 people went from 7 percent to 31 percent, and firms of 5 to 9 people went from 8 percent to 28 percent. These statistics are a good indicator for the general level of technology used comfortably at firms. Small firms are probably seeing the advantages of technology to their practice. Almost 60 percent of sole practitioners transfer their drawings electronically. Small firms also are using the Internet to do research.

#### *Use of Internet by small firms*

- Product specifications—87%
- Federal/state/local regulations—50%
- Potential clients—31%
- Potential consultants and vendors—41%
- Competitions and business leads—27%

#### *Small firms use Web-based design software to*

- Collaborate with engineers—38%
- Collaborate with clients—30%
- Collaborate with contractors—21%

Small firms typically spend a smaller percentage of their earnings on marketing. The fact that most of their work is from noncompetitive sources helps explain this situation.

In summary, to successfully ride the up and down cycles of the economy and weather increased competition from mid-sized firms, small firms are

- Billing for expanded services and other nonbasic design services
- Embracing the Web to do a range of tasks, from product specifications to collaborating with project team members
- Balancing a mix of project types, building types, and client types and services.

*Richard L. Hayes, PhD, AIA  
AIA National Component*

## **The Top Ten Ways to Prevent Major Screwups (Or...If My Design Is so Beautiful, Why am I Being Sued?)**

*Presented by: Mark Kelley, Esq.,  
Miller Brown & Dannis, San  
Francisco; Jack B. W. Ken, AIA,  
Anshen & Allen Architects (retired),  
Hillsborough, Calif.; Brian Torone,  
AIA, Deloitte & Touche LLP, San  
Francisco*

*Session 107; Friday, May 5, 2000  
3:45–5:15 p.m.*

### **10. Assuming everything will be fine**

#### **Problem**

- Acting as if precontract goodwill will continue throughout the project
- Getting too wrapped up in the design
- Lack of protection in construction documents.

#### **Solution**

- Draft and enforce good contract terms
- Coordinate/tailor off-the-shelf forms
- Select a project team that cares about the documents
- Set up procedures for reporting and alerting to problems
- Use experienced people in key positions and keep them.

### **9. Overpaying the contractor**

#### **Problem**

- Front-end loaded payment schedules
- Failing to verify percentage of completion
- Failing to understand the cost, time, and liability effects of change orders
- Failing to get lien releases.

#### **Solution**

- Be skeptical of the contractor's Schedule of Values and payment applications
- Critically review construction progress
- Make sure experienced construction people evaluate payment issues.

### **8. Losing the document war**

#### **Problem**

*What a nice contractor*

- Offering to do the meeting minutes
- Offering to document the issues

#### *The Architect*

- "I'm a designer, not a letter writer"
- Responding to all issues takes time

#### *The Owner*

- Just don't have the time/staff/budget.

#### **Solution**

- Control the meeting minutes
- Provide resources to respond
- Track RFIs and submittals
- Clearly document the reasons for changes.

### **7. Expecting the Taj Mahal on an outhouse budget**

#### **Problem**

- Not being realistic from the beginning
- Failing to reconcile the budget with the program
- Failing to reconcile the budget with the design.

#### **Solution**

- Constantly reconcile the budget with the program
- Provide for contingencies

- Know the construction market
- Get appropriate advice on construction costs.

## **6. Bad drawings and specifications**

### **Problem**

- Not adhering to, or understanding codes
- Constant tinkering with the design
- Not knowing when the design is complete enough
- Details are not commensurate with a design's complexity
- Lack of constructability review by others.

### **Solution**

#### **PreBid**

- Continually document the status of the design
- Diligently perform drawing reviews and coordination
- Insist on constructability reviews.

#### **Postbid**

- Use experienced people in key positions
- Immediately address the effect of changes.

## **5. Failing to coordinate design**

### **Problem**

#### **Prebid**

- Changes affecting other disciplines
- Design consultants not communicating with the architect.

#### **Postbid**

- Design consultants authorizing changes during construction
- Design consultants not communicating with the architect.

### **Solution**

- Set up proper lines of communication and chains of command
- Hold regular meetings with consultants
- Perform regular design and coordination reviews
- Don't assume that contract language will protect you
- Provide clauses requiring the contractor to avoid conflicts
- Provide clauses requiring the contractor to verify existing conditions before bid.

## **4. Failing to understand your responsibilities**

### **Problem**

- "I'm a designer, not a spec writer"
- "I'm going to design like I've always designed"
- "I'm the master builder, so don't bother me with details."

### **Solution**

- Be precise and comprehensive
- Recognize that contractors bid only what is in the construction documents
- Recognize how broad (and unforgiving) an architect's responsibilities are.

## **3. Slow response time**

### **Problem**

#### **Slow/delayed response on**

- RFIs
- Shop drawings
- Samples
- Clarifications

- Being snowed under by contractor paperwork.

### **Solution**

- Specify reasonable response times in contracts
- Require contractors to provide submittal schedules (with float)
- Produce regular submittal logs and response files.

## **2. Ignoring schedule delays**

### **Problem**

- Failing to establish a realistic project finish date
- Failing to define the contractor's baseline schedule
- Failing to track progress against the baseline schedule
- Failing to understand schedule impacts.

### **Solution**

- Be realistic
- Find similar projects and determine schedule histories
- Don't be afraid to be the bearer of bad news
- Continuously monitor how changes affect schedules.

## **1. Getting drawn into an emotional battle**

### **Problem**

- Some people don't like you
- All parties are emotionally invested in construction projects
- All parties know how to do everyone else's job, but much better.

### **Solution**

- Be professional and respectful
- Filter out inflammatory language (verbal and written)
- Consider partnering.

### **Conclusions of session**

- Understand the motivations of other parties
- The makeup of the architect team is crucial
- Document your actions
- Realize that construction is business, not art or war.

*Richard L. Hayes, PhD, AIA  
AIA National Component*

## **How to Say Yes, How to Say No**

*Presented by Ava J. Abramowitz,  
Hon. AIA, Waterford, Va.*

*Session S108; Friday, May 5, 2000  
3:45–5:15 p.m.*

### **A Guide to Negotiating Owner-Developed Contracts**

Contracts are based on the Standard of Care of the architect and the contractor.

- Architects exercise reasonable judgment, skill, and care
- Contractors guarantee performance in strict conformance with the contract documents; therefore, the defenses are as follows:
  - Architects' compliance with the profession's Standard of Care is a defense for failure to achieve a desired result

- Contractors' conformance to industry practices is not a defense for failure to adhere to the contract documents.

### **The Goals of Design Contracts**

- To make the progress of the project predictable
- To help the parties achieve their objectives
- To make sure the party in the best position to control risk has all the power and responsibility it needs to control the risk.

### **Ava's Basic Rules of Contract Interpretation**

1. If it does not make sense, read it out loud.
2. If it still does not make sense, get a second opinion.
3. If it still does not make sense, assume that it does not and do not sign it.
4. If you cannot objectively measure it, redefine it.
5. Everything is negotiable.
6. Every quid deserves a quo.

### **Four Key Concepts to remember when interpreting a contract**

1. Exposure
2. Capability
3. Responsibility
4. Power

Once you have read the contract, identified the key concepts, and redefined the concepts to your best ability, measure your risk and evaluate your risk options.

- Take the risk
- Leave the risk
- Make it less risky
- Allocate the risk
- Transfer the risk.

Reference materials recommended by the author/presenter:

### **Negotiating information**

*Getting to Yes*, Fisher and Ury  
(Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1981)

### **Selling information**

*Spin Selling*, Neil Rackman  
(New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1988)

*Laura Lee Russell, AIA  
AIA Oklahoma City*

## **Transferring Ownership and Leadership: Leading the Charge**

*Presented by Peter Piven, FAIA,  
The Coxe Group, Inc, Philadelphia;  
Jerry K. Roller, AIA, J.K. Roller  
Architects, Philadelphia; James W.  
Rowe, AIA, Agoos/Lavera Architects,  
Philadelphia; Peter M. Saylor, FAIA,  
Dagit Saylor Architects, Philadelphia*

*Session S127; Saturday, May 6, 2000  
1:45–3:15 p.m.*

When I first signed up for this seminar, I thought it was *Leading the Charge*. My misperception was probably something Freudian, but I was convinced the subject matter was going to deal with building a firm's value, selling it, and getting out as fast as possible. Not that that topic would interest me, per se, but I thought it was an interesting premise to present at the AIA Convention to architects, a profession I thought never ever really thinks about putting down the pencil—ever.

Why transfer ownership of something that no one else can ever own, I asked myself. How can your singular ideas, your vision, or your leadership of a firm be transferred at all, especially for legal tender? Who would want to buy something so unique, so personal, so, presumably, nontransferable?

First, the seminar was very good. Two of the speakers were well respected, talented architects from Philadelphia who have started their own firms and who still run them on an everyday basis. These people, I found out, were the sellers and the other one was a buyer. The moderator was Peter Piven, FAIA, of the Coxe Group, probably the most respected management consultant for architects in the world. His insights and experience were extremely valuable. The fact that Piven is a managing partner in a very good Philadelphia firm (GBQC), gives his expertise a real, solid foundation and credibility. The other participant, a lawyer, was there to address legal issues.

The testimonials of the three speakers were very good. Peter Saylor, FAIA, and Jerry Roller, AIA, both started their firms and are very successful and respected in the Philadelphia area. Both explained that any transition always seems to take longer than expected. There are major decisions to be made on both sides of the equation: When to sell? Should I sell? Who to sell to? What to sell for? How much should I sell? What advice do I need and from whom? These questions were the concerns primarily of the seller. James Rowe, AIA, is an architect who bought into a firm, Agoos/Lovera Architects, another well-respected, successful firm in the Philadelphia area. His perspective as a buyer was somewhat the same as the seller's,

albeit in terms of *entering* into a relationship, not of exiting.

Each firm used the Coxe Group as their consultant in evaluating the value of the firm and devising the best mechanism for purchase and sale. The key to a smooth transition is in deferring compensation and staged buy-ins over time to make the purchase payments easy for the purchaser. The transition period actually was one of relative stability in each firm as principals (sellers) worked hard to *maintain* value, and the new partners (buyers) worked hard to *create* value. The audience was composed of one-third buyers and two-thirds sellers. All questions relating to the subject were good, so getting the audio-tape would be of value.

Overall, the seminar was informative: not long enough to cover this somewhat complex activity, but a good head start into what is up with changing, *not* charging of the guard.

*Ted Mondzelewski, AIA  
AIA Philadelphia*

## **Tips and Traps of Using Nonstandard Agreements**

*Presented by Werner Sabo, FAIA,  
and James Zahn, FAIA, Sabo & Zahn,  
Attorneys at Law, Chicago*

*Session S128; Saturday, May 6, 2000  
1:45–3:15 p.m.*

I have used both standard AIA agreements and written letters on my projects. I attended this seminar knowing full well that the presenters would point out the weaknesses in my simple scope letters. However, I wanted enough information to make me change my mind about continuing to use these letters of agreement on future small projects. I heard the

information I needed to do just that.

First, the presenter pointed out that a bad agreement could be worse than no agreement. A bad agreement could lead directly to your liability, even if public law would otherwise cover you.

Letters of agreement often do not include many things, such as:

- a. Lien requirements
- b. General Conditions of the Contract
- c. Mediation/arbitration clauses
- d. Copyright laws/rights
- e. Code changes that become effective during the duration of your contract, which constitute additional services.

This seminar also suggested other modifications you can use to standardize agreements. The most interesting item discussed was the use of limits on liability of the architect. The presenter felt very strongly that you should try to include this element in all agreements.

Copyright laws also were discussed. The presenters stated that when you create a design or drawing, you own the copyright to it. Your client can use this information only on the project for which you are contracted. Selling the copyright to this information to your client takes away your right to reuse the same details or design concepts on your future projects. Also, if a client stops paying you, they lose their copyright privileges.

The presenters also suggested that if you give out electronic files, you should protect yourself by giving them out only with a disclaimer.

One additional copyright note I found interesting was the situation in which a client has purchased a set of drawings from a plan service and wants you to incorporate those changes. This practice could be violat-

ing the copyright privileges of the original designer. You should have a letter from the original designer releasing the rights to you before you make such changes.

If you do use letters of agreement, it was also highly suggested that you incorporate the AIA B141 into your agreement by reference. You can state something like "All terms of AIA B141 are included by reference unless there is a conflict between this letter and the B141." Be careful in doing this, however, because the new B141 includes more services than the old one that you could be required to complete.

In summary, the AIA documents are not a perfect fit for all projects. I have heard many architects complain about the length of the standard contract forms and how we are sometimes concerned to use these for fear of the client being scared off by them. As the presenters shared with us in this seminar, we as architects are seen as professionals and, as such, are expected to complete the work we do in a professional manner. Using a standard contract in lieu of a simple letter does demonstrate a more professional approach. If that approach scares a client, maybe we should look harder at that client to see if it is really worth doing their project.

The B151 Standard Form of Agreement for Small Projects provides a shorter contract to start with than does the B141 that may be more suited to this non-threatening approach. In either case, there are ways to eliminate sections that don't apply to the specific project or to add sections where needed. The fact that so many more items are covered in these documents than are usually covered in a letter of agreement makes it an obvious advantage to the architect to use them.

*Jerald Morgan, AIA  
AIA Vancouver*

## **Making Chaos Work for You: Keys to Small Firm Management**

*Presented by Rena Klein, AIA, MSM,  
management consultant and educator,  
Seattle*

*Session S163; Saturday, May 6, 2000  
4:00–5:30 p.m.*

Do you work evenings and weekends on a regular basis? Do you spend your days "fire-fighting" or scrambling to take advantage of a sudden opportunity? Do you feel so pressured by current demands that you cannot possibly plan for the future? If you do, you are not alone.

Many principals in small firms will describe their work life in this way. The work is unrelenting, demanding, and unpredictable. Anything can happen at any time, and there is very little cushion to fall back on. The day-to-day demands make it hard to take time to plan for the future and, even if you try, there are no guarantees.

How, then, do small firm owners deal with constantly shifting workloads and unexpected circumstances? How can they cope with the demands of the market and still create a satisfying workplace environment? How will they hope to set professional goals and achieve them in this environment of unrelenting change? These questions are addressed in this seminar, but there are no simple answers presented. Whatever is happening in a practice, the cause is usually a complex web of interlocking factors affecting one another. Like a complicated design problem, everything is connected.

### **Key one: noticing patterns**

Chaos Theory tells us that patterns emerge over time, even from the most chaotic circumstances. Ask, "Have we seen this before?" and notice if certain processes produce the same undesirable outcome over and over again. These repeating patterns point to areas that need improvement.

In most firms, improving time management, communication effectiveness, and, especially, staff satisfaction will result in increased productivity. In the full seminar, these three factors and practical tips for improvement are discussed in considerable depth.

### **Key two: routinize the routine**

Most firms need to improve their work processes. Look for bottlenecks, wasted efforts, and blatant inefficiency. Distinguish between routine work and nonroutine work, and create systems that handle routine tasks in standard ways. This effort will leave more time for the nonroutine work, i.e., design.

### **Key three: provide self-aware leadership**

Create order out of chaos by using values, vision, and ethics as management tools. These elements are known as conceptual controls and are more powerful than mere rules. Firm principals set the tone and model behavior, so be aware of your tendencies, your values, and your purpose. Self-aware leadership is critical to success in small firms.

This seminar presents both theory and practical advice for creating a more profitable and satisfying small firm practice. The full seminar is available at [AECDirect.com](http://AECDirect.com) or from Klein Consulting, [rmklein@aol.com](mailto:rmklein@aol.com)

*Rena Klein, AIA, MSM  
AIA Seattle*



## Practicing Small Successfully

*Presented by Peter Piven, FAIA, The Coxe Group, Inc.; Richard M. Cole, AIA, Richard M. Cole and Associates; Alan Metcalfe, AIA, Metcalfe + Tsirontonas Architects; Rachel Schade, AIA, Schade and Bolender Architects (all firms are in Philadelphia)*

*Session S165; Saturday, May 6, 2000  
4:00–5:30 p.m.*

To prepare for the AIA National Convention seminar on Practicing Small Successfully, we distributed a questionnaire to members of the SPF to elicit their responses to some key questions about practice. We very much appreciate the participation of all those who responded. The information provided was timely, interesting, informative, and, above all, pertinent. Here, for your use, is a summary of the responses used in the convention session.

### Questionnaire Responses

In what year did you start your firm?

- Range: 1 year to 22 years
- Mean firm age: 10 years

When you began, did you intend to stay small?

- Yes: 91%
- No: 9%

How many people were employed in 1999, including yourself?

- Range: 1 to 16
- Mean size: 2.4

What is the largest number of staff you have had?

- Range: 1 to 18
- Mean size: 3.5

In what market or markets did you provide the majority of your services?

- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| • Residential   | 47% |
| • Commercial    | 30% |
| • Institutional | 10% |
| • Religious     | 4%  |
| • Medical       | 3%  |
| • Government    | 3%  |
| • Interiors     | 1%  |
| • Restoration   | 1%  |
| • Urban design  | 1%  |
| • Consulting    | 1%  |

On a scale of 1 to 7, where “1” means totally unsuccessful and “7” means totally successful, what number best indicates how you feel about the success of your firm?

- Mean response: 5.02

### How do you define that success? What are its elements?

#### Summary themes:

- Repeat and steady flow of work and stability
- Happy, satisfied clients
- Enjoyment of the work
- Flexible schedule

What would you do differently if you could start over?

#### Summary themes:

- Nothing
- Start sooner
- Get more experience in advance, especially about business
- Plan more and better

### What advice would you give an architect thinking about practicing as a small firm?

#### Summary themes:

- Get experience. Work in a variety of firms. Learn about running a practice
- Master business and people skills
- Develop relationships; everything leads somewhere.

*Peter Piven, FAIA  
The Coxe Group, Inc.*

## Director's Note

If you missed Convention and are interested in the audio tapes for these sessions, please check the June 2000 issue of *AIArchitect* (pages 14–15) for availability. Additionally, the Web site, [www.aiaconvention2000.com](http://www.aiaconvention2000.com), has many of the handouts available for downloading at no charge.

**Mark your calendar for SPF events at Convention 2001, to be held in Denver, May 16–19, 2001**

**Wednesday, May 16**  
Local Advisors Dinner

**Friday, May 18**  
Brochure Exchange and Reception

**Saturday, May 19**  
Sole Practitioners Breakfast

*If you would like to report on issues relevant to the Small Projects Forum from your area on a regular basis, we invite you to join our network of Local Advisors. Please call Laura Lee Russell, AIA.*

*The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the Advisory Group, the AIA staff members who prepared the report, or The American Institute of Architects.*

## 2000 Advisory Group

### Small Project Forum PIA

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