

## Mindset Differences – Major Leaguers v. Minor Leaguers

### Executive Summary.

There's a different mindset between major league contractors and minor league contractors. Here's three ways they differ.

### Graduating to the big

**leagues.** You're in the elite group when you score an A+ on all of the bonding 3 C's: character, capacity/controls, and capital. Being in the big

leagues is not about doing billions, or even tens or hundreds of millions, in revenue. It's about professionalism and operational efficiency gained from decades of your, or others', mistakes. You graduate from the minor leagues when you realize that things like working capital, clean pickup trucks, current software (versus a beat up clipboard), and an equipment maintenance program are vital to your business' success – just to name a few.



**Top three mindsets.** This list would likely be different between all authors, but three things in my mind separate the pros from the amateurs:

1. **Planning beyond tomorrow** – if you're not at least two weeks ahead in planning, you're behind in planning in the construction world. But if you've been around enough larger jobs, the mindset changes into a default of thinking a month or three ahead of schedule. Instead of thinking about concrete deliveries tomorrow, you think about the possibility of a labor strike and what that can do to your project.
2. **Process, process, process** – having controls in place for everything is learned on larger jobs too. Logs for documents, procedures for communication of Owner-affecting events, writing meeting minutes/agendas, true quality control – these are all things learned by older and larger contractors that can be learned and implemented by the little guy.
3. **Change management** – knowing what is in the Contract, insofar as notice and the rules of cost and markup are, is critical. The big leaguers know this Contract-mandated process of notification (and know what happens if you do

not know what the rule is), and do everything they can to get paid for what is theirs.

**My story.** Proper preparation prevents piss poor performance. That's what they say. And they're right. Planning the work is critical to success.

No one ever made a lot of money by waking up each morning and just then starting to think about what they needed to do that day. And then went to the local hardware store to get supplies for him and the other four guys on the crew. This is a great example of how not to plan, how not to be efficient.



When you start your company, or work for a company, or as an Owner pick your Contractor to build your job, ask about the planning the Company does. Be looking for certainty and decisiveness. Words like "will", "followed by", and "after" are better than words like "may" and "depends" and "likely". Stronger words show experience in the task and certainty of events. Weaker words portend excuses and show lack of experience.

Work safe!