



My presentation at the Institute for BIM in Canada conference on IPD last week, which was skillfully set up and managed by Howard Ashcraft, nicely coincided with Greg Howell's recent Member Note about the work of Professor Sam Bowles, from the Santa Fe Institute. Bowles and his co-author, Herbert Gintis, ponder the question how man has evolved into such a cooperative creature. Their research indicates the cooperative instinct trumps even self-interest. They posit that people, in fact, feel embarrassed and guilty when they don't collaborate for a group's benefit. They've explored that concept in the book Greg speaks of, *A Cooperative Species: Human Reciprocity and Its Evolution*.

It was timely and instructive last week because we were exploring Integrated Project Delivery and its relationship to BIM. Dave Hagan from Boldt along with his partners on a Moose Jaw hospital from Graham Construction discussed at length the kind of collaboration necessary to make projects effective and to effectively incorporate the tools of project design and management represent by the concept of building information modeling. Dave talked about the importance to his teams of Stephen Covey, Jr.'s book, *The Speed of Trust*. Another presenter from the Alberta government also praised that book as so important to what they're trying to do that they give a copy to all new hires. Of course, trust is at the heart of real collaboration.

However (and this may not surprise many of you), I pushed back on the importance of the particular formula Covey uses in his book. The writings of Fernando Flores and Robert Solomon in *Building Trust in Business, Politics and Relationships*, have warned me against a formulaic application of trust. The heart of the formula is that trust is comprised of character (the integrity of the person making a commitment) and their competence (do they have the tools to carry out their commitment). But Flores and Solomon point out that even bad people can be trustworthy in some circumstances. Moreover, some people are able to accomplish much through others so their own competence may not be at the fulcrum of their promise. Flores and Solomon make a very simple point: "Authentic trust can never be taken for granted, but must be continuously cultivated through commitments and truthfulness. True leadership, whatever else it may be, can be based on nothing less."

So I warned people in Toronto and continue to warn folks that the speed of trust is actually kind of dangerous in our business. Clearly, there is a tax for not trusting people and I applaud Covey for talking about that. I'm starting a series of workshops tomorrow with a governmental agency that builds a lot, and pays sometimes 50% more than market because they lack trust in their own processes, not to mention in the people they hire to do their work. But those of us in design and construction can't sleep at night knowing that the architect is taking care of it, or the drywaller is taking care of it unless we have fully communicated with our partners our expectations and our understandings of their work. At the very heart of the Last Planner® System is a political conversation of deep understanding about the kind of work I will do for you and you will do for me—its represented in DPR's pre-printed stickies "What I Get, What I Give".



It is an important, two way conversation that is not hurried and not in jargon. It requires a deep exploration.

When I say the *Speed of Trust* is a dangerous book, I really mean that short-cutting conversations, or having conversations in the language of P6 or some other technology, does not drive us to deep understanding. We need to talk more, not less. We need to understand, as Flores was first to stress, the conditions of satisfaction—what will satisfy the request I'm making of some one. How many conversations in a trailer or design studio start with "I thought you meant . . ." or "I assumed . . ." Transparency isn't the 60 second sound bite on Fox News or MSNBC—it is the deep understanding of our commitments to one another. True collaboration, real collaboration, is driving to deep understandings of the work we anticipate doing and making sure we're all on the same sentence, not just the same page. We have no room for misunderstandings, short cuts or, even, "speed."

With no real pun intended, I trust you'll take my musings to heart.

Thanks for all you do and, as always, be safe my friends.