

INDIFFERENCE

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In architecture, engineering and construction mere indifference can be fatal—literally, figuratively and professionally! You simply have to know what you are doing, why and how best to achieve your end in a safe, serviceable and stable manner.

Anybody else ever say it to you in those terms--say, like a prof? Say like an employer? Say like in the admonishment of a judge or court? More than likely not, because in a way this is the "dirty" side of the professions--the nifty-gritty, bottom line concept--No! Not concept, reality!

Day by day we all are immersed in work that often we take as routine, perhaps, mundane, too familiar and some lucky ones, in startling new and exciting ways. Some aspects of project simply do not invoke a spirit of adventure, or excitement of the creative juices--they are just "there" and need to be done. In this we cast no dispersions, but rather hold the idea that much of what we do and have others do is never seen once the project is completed--so who really care? Therein is born indifference, our stark enemy and the threat to all we are and wish to be.

Flat out, you simply have to maintain, at a high level, the dedication and commitment to the right thing, in the right way, in the right place--relentlessly! Others may scowl at your suggestion when in reality it may be the saving grace of their career. Others may discount your concept and approach only to follow (and invite you along) a narrower and more risky path--watch your step!).

This is no slam at innovation or cutting edge whatever, but merely a watch-out that what you do to achieve something very new and quite different is not all that different from you do for a more sedate solution. Fire burns anywhere; soil fails or collapses anywhere; faulty design, miscalculation, and bad assumption prevail everywhere--there is no forgiveness. To know and assume is perhaps the worst; to be ignorant of fact is a very close second--and the more heinous and absolutely unforgivable is indifference (as in, "oh, it won't make that much difference any way!!!) Uh, see you in court—one day!

Vigilant and diligent we must be. Staying the course is not a vague precept, but a function reality that we need to maintain without hesitation or gap. Not overbearing, but professional; not imposing and grouchy, showing courage of conviction; and acting correctly even when others choose a far less prudent path (but we can save the world or those who simply--well.....are indifferent!) Such a crude and insidious attribute, but one that can easily slip into any life at any time over any circumstance whether caring for an infant or topping out a skyscraper! Driving a car recklessly for no discernable reason, or peeling out on a "hog" sans helmet!

We need to fully understand that this is part of what we do--period! No divine reward necessarily, but simply a resolve and dedication to our best professional effort, for the sake of others. But still what do you wink and nod at all too often? What do you re-prioritize to lower status without a blink of the eye? Or better, what you do care least about, so being indifferent really fits the situation?

Don't e-mail me your answer(s)--but for Pete's sake think about all this.....please!