



## COMMUNICATION

In a Design-Build project, relationships are built between the team members during the design phase, ensuring that the stage is set for a successful construction project. All team members are involved from the beginning, and communication between the Builders and Design Professionals ensures that potential problems are discovered before construction starts.

In a successful Design-Build project, the relationship between the Design Professional and the Builder is an alliance that fosters collaboration and teamwork. This relationship also benefits both the Builder and the Design Professional, in that they support each other's marketing and business efforts.

There is a risk for an unequal relationship between the Designer and the Builder, in which the project lead does not understand, trust or value the role and expertise of the subcontractor(s).

## SCHEDULING

Design-Build projects can usually be completed in a shorter timeframe because bid time is reduced, and scheduling can begin before the design is finalized. Potential construction problems are usually uncovered early and enhanced team communication can keep the project moving.

Traditional Design-Bid-Build projects must be phased so that each responsibility is completed before the next can begin. Design-Build projects can potentially overlap these features; the subcontractor bidding period can be simultaneous with the production of construction documents, and construction can even begin before the drawings are complete. An experienced Design-Build team can save time with simpler construction documents and a streamlined change order process.

## QUALITY CONTROL

Team collaboration from the beginning of the project helps to remove ambiguity that may arise in construction documents. Since the project team should be effectively communicating throughout the design process, the construction documents are developed with input from all team members.

In a Design-Build contract, the Contractor is the Owner's representative, and therefore the change order risk is shifted to the party best able to control changes. The Builder is also able to correct the changes more quickly, without first having to determine the responsible party.

Since the Owner does not have separate contracts with the Designer and the Builder, they also do not have a system of checks and balances, as mentioned before. It may be necessary for the Owner to hire an independent consultant to manage problems and hold all team members accountable.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Dennis W. Rex, AIA, NCARB, Principal, serves as the firm's chief administrative officer. He brings over thirty-five years of architectural experience in the planning, design and rehabilitation of residential, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings.*

*Project experience includes both foreign and domestic research laboratories, transportation facilities, educational buildings, maintenance facilities, manufacturing structures, office complexes, medical facilities, housing, and, most recently, places of worship. Dennis is involved in all phases of projects from programming through construction administration.*



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