

Three Ways Construction Risk Assessment Empowers Your Teams

Written by: InEight Blog Editors

Construction project risk is the elephant in the room; everyone knows it's there but hesitates to acknowledge it because its focus is typically on what can go wrong – a subject not only hard to predict but also uncomfortable to deal with.

While we know preventing all adverse risks is impossible, proactively reducing their occurrences and severity can make dealing with them much more manageable. That's why construction risk assessment is so valuable.

This process involves pinpointing, evaluating, and managing risk factors and what-if scenarios. Consider it an ongoing preemptive measure that puts more control in your hands.

Yet it does something even greater – it empowers your project teams out in the field, where many risks occur. Let's look at three key ways around how this happens.

» **When you involve teams in the risk identification and assessment process**, they can contribute their unique experience and expertise to help prevent otherwise unknown risks.

Half the battle in risk management is in the knowing; you can't manage or mitigate what you don't know about. Inviting team involvement supplements what analytics will tell you by going beyond the data and into actual human experience.

So it's worth garnering their input. What specific factors occurred in prior projects that owners and construction managers should know? What was the observed impact on scope, safety, and efficiency? What mitigation efforts – whether



prearranged contingency plans or in-the-moment actions – worked or didn't work?

This proactive problem-solving gives everyone an ownership stake in the collective risk management process. It's not just the project that benefits, however; it directly improves the site crew's safety and productivity. It's a win-win on all fronts.

» **Holding risk management workshops during your planning phase** can empower project teams to see risk and its mitigation as a shared experience – because risk mitigation is a collaborative effort, just as construction is.

Risk events aren't always isolated incidents impacting just one team. Since construction is a multidisciplinary industry, teams may experience their effects differently and therefore have particular ideas on mitigating them.

Surfacing these during risk management workshops brings it all out into the open, where everyone can contribute their insights while getting a glimpse into the unique perspective other teams bring to the same scenario.


When assessing risks, each discipline and job function may answer the same questions differently. For example, what lessons were learned? What was missing in prior risk mitigation efforts? Based on past risks, what preventative measures or contingency plans might work better to mitigate the fallout from that risk? Were performance metrics used to help forecast risk probability and severity? How did those metrics reflect the human experience? How were other teams impacted?

Collectively, this exploration can be used to forge a collaborative approach to creating reality-based construction plans and “what if” contingency strategies. But even after the planning is over and the execution phase has begun, that same risk-mitigating group effort must be maintained if the project is to be successful. Because ideally, this knowledge-sharing exercise will foster a culture of accountability and responsibility in which teams are empowered to call out risks that may have otherwise gone unaccounted for so they can be proactively addressed.

» **Together, offering this opportunity to contribute their experience and foster collaboration** delivers a third team empowerment scenario: consensus- and confidence-building.

With all that can happen and all that’s at stake with any large-scale capital project, building consensus and confidence might be among the last things teams could hope for.

However, involving all disciplines and stakeholders in the risk assessment process is a solid step in the right direction to ensure that everyone’s concerns, experiences, and perspectives are considered, fostering a collaborative environment that promotes trust and confidence in achieving the owner’s expectations. Because working together to develop strategies that mitigate those risks encourages agreement around the best courses of action. This team involvement leads to better, more comprehensive, and more inclusive decisions.

As everyone becomes more knowledgeable and proactive in addressing potential issues that could impact project delivery, they become more invested in the project’s success, leading to a more engaged, supportive, and unified team. 



About the Article

This article is republished from the [InEight Behind the Build online blog](#). [InEight](#) provides field-tested construction project management software for the owners, contractors, engineers, and architects who are building the world around us. Customers worldwide rely on InEight for real-time insights that help manage risk and keep projects on schedule and under budget across the entire life cycle.

Any views and opinions expressed in this article may or may not reflect the views and opinions of the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA). By publishing this piece, CMAA is not expressing endorsement of the individual, the article, or their association, organization, or company.