

Just Ask the Expert

This general information is not intended to provide individual advice. Schedule an appointment with an expert to discuss your particular situation and needs. Questions sent to our experts may be answered in future "JUST ASK THE EXPERT" pages.

Commercial Real Estate Development

Q:

What are major issues threatening economic sustainability?



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A: In the past we've treated the issues of public transportation and affordable workforce housing as separate policy problems. In fact, they are closely linked. People move to the suburbs to afford a home and make long, fossil-fuel-burning, air-polluting, time-wasting commutes to do so. In our urban areas, public transportation is thought of as inconvenient at best and occasionally dangerous.

By creating real communities in and near urban work centers, we can provide sufficient usage to improve our public transportation. This is smart community development in three ways: it encourages redevelopment, it's better for the environment, and, with sufficient densities, it allows us to create more affordable workforce housing near jobs.

If we are to have a vibrant economy and a great quality of life, we must think beyond job creation to sustained economic growth. To do that, we have to think about where that workforce will live and how they'll get to work. It's a challenge shared equally by business and government.



Call Grady for a more detailed explanation, or for specific information on commercial real estate development.

Management & Leadership

Q:

Time and time again we hear that the most important issue facing organizations is finding and hiring the right people – how can I ensure that my company is doing this in a consistent manner?



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A: Hiring is a million dollar decision. Over a 10-15 year period the cost of an average employee will be well in excess of that amount. There are three important things to consider when hiring an employee to ensure that you are making a wise investment:

Eligibility. The candidate must meet the minimum criteria for the job description.

Suitability. Once eligibility is established, use behavioral assessments to ensure that the candidate will enjoy the position and has the skills to be successful at it.

Cultural Fit. Have the candidate review the values statement of your company to make sure that they share them. To further challenge this, create situational questions (and desired responses) for each candidate to determine if their values are truly aligned with those of the company.

Finally, don't let your emotions make the decision for you. Liking a candidate is not enough - you must maintain objectivity so that you can truly find the best person for the role.



Call Sean for a more detailed explanation, or for specific information on management & leadership.

Employee Health Benefits

Q:

Are disease management programs worth the investment? Will the programs help me save money?



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A: Disease management and wellness programs will be just as important, if not more so, as we enter the new consumer-driven world. As employees become more engaged in medical services decisions, these programs are a great tool for them to manage conditions and reduce costs.

By design, the programs encourage employees to be proactive about their care, which helps lower future medical costs. When your employees use these programs to manage their health, you experience better productivity, reduced hospitalization costs, decreased sick days and an overall healthier work environment. And if you self-fund your benefits there is more of an advantage since you pay only for actual claims. So when the disease management programs are effective, your company - not the insurer - pockets the savings.

You may discover that as your employees assume a greater role in their health and health care choices, it pays to make investments in their employees' health.



For more information about disease management programs and employee benefits, please contact Tracy Carter at tracy.carter@gwl.com.

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