



DEMLANG BUILDS ON A LEGACY OF QUALITY



Rod Demlang, president of Demlang Builders, is a legacy. As a third-generation builder, it's in his blood. "As a kid, I was always taking things apart and reconstructing them, and of course I had the best fort on the block," he said. "At 17, I started a construction company and 'date night' with my girlfriend meant late nights finishing projects together, which must have done the trick because she married me."

What do you enjoy about building?

The Demlang team. Most people don't realize it takes hundreds of people to build a home. Creating a home from nothing is a monumental undertaking. Leading our extended team of trade contractors through the process and bringing the client's dreams to life takes hard work, dependability and outstanding performances from everyone on the team.

How do you differentiate your business from others?

The Demlang building experience is very unique. We try to give people back their time by eliminating the headaches and challenges associated with new home construction. We've had such great feedback from people who say 'I'd build a Demlang again in a heartbeat.' Several dozen clients have built with us a second or third time because the experience was so great.

What advice would you give someone looking to build or remodel?

It's important to look at models and floor plans, but more importantly, get to know the people who are building your home. Get to know the project managers, selections coordinators and the owners early in the process, if possible. These people will spend the next six months with you. First and foremost, you need to like each other. Also, I know it's cliché but it's true: you get what you pay for. By understanding building materials and construction quality, you can make a decision based on value, not just budget.

How has being a member of the MBA helped your business?

As a longtime member, we've been actively involved in education, the Parade of Homes, advertising and more. However, serving as the president was the most impactful thing. I learned a lot about the nonprofit entity and discovered unique ways to work amongst my peers and



associates. The experience taught me a lot about my own business and I gained immensely helpful leadership skills.

What activities do you participate in at the MBA?

As president and chief officer of the Metropolitan Builders Association, I was the official spokesperson in matters of public policy, appointment of committee chairs, development of the annual plan and performing all the duties usual to the office. Some major accomplishments during our term included: ending fiscal year better than planned with a surplus, stabilizing our membership numbers, combining and restructuring committees. Our leadership team was also essential in the formation of our B2B networking groups to promote members doing business with members.

How has technology changed your business?

It changes every week, from social media sites like Facebook, Houzz and Pinterest to the technology we use at home. It helps you make more informed decisions, staying lean and using resources to the fullest advantage. Everything constantly evolves and improves. Our cloud-based project management system, the technology behind our website and online advertising provide us schedules, analytics, updates and other information. A few years ago, we relied only on the in-paper advertising of the Journal Sentinel, and could not measure the impact. Now, digital messaging through jsonline.com and other avenues shows a direct path of traffic to our website and to our contact page submissions.

What is advice you'd give someone looking for a career in the building industry?

There are huge opportunities in the building trades. The labor shortage and the rebounding housing market provide incredible job security. It's also a satisfying career. Even though you might specialize in one specific area, you operate as part of a team in creating a masterpiece that families will enjoy for a lifetime.

What is your proudest professional achievement?

The fact that my name is associated with each home we build means we must do good work that we're proud of. You don't have the liberty of hiding behind a company brand when your name is on the door.

What is your favorite quote/saying that represents your business philosophy?

"Winning is not a sometime thing; it is an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while, you don't do things right once in a while; you do them right all the time." ~Vince Lombardi

Who is your personal hero?

My wife. She accepted my invitation to prom many years ago, and she's been at my side ever since - helping serve our clients through the building process and integrating with our vendors and trade partners.

What charitable groups are you involved with?

I was our team leader for Make-A-Wish Wisconsin. We raised enough money to grant a wish and participated in the August walk/run. We've also been involved with The Becky Werner Meningitis Foundation, Cops and Bobbers, Bowling Buddies and Badge Buddy – City of Pewaukee, The Women's Center, Merton Athletic Association and Sussex Youth Baseball.

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