



Travis Parker Martin

Awesome. Well, I think we're officially live. So welcome, everybody, to Zero to productive project managers. My name is Travis, joined by talented Paul Sullivan, and we're really excited to dive in. As you filter in, please share with us where you're from, company that you're working for. One of the things that I think is so cool about these webinars is we can be in our basements or our home offices, but still connecting with people all across North America. So share with us where you're from and the company that you're with as you start to filter in here. But Paul, actually I wanted to chat about this when we were planning this webinar. So if this is the first time that you've tuned into a Zero to Productive webinar, this is actually our third in the series. We chatted about water mitigation technicians, we've chatted about estimators. But Paul, when we were proposing this topic of project managers, I think you said, hold the phone, let's hop on a call because I think that there's a really big opportunity with this project management discussion.



Travis Parker Martin

So I'm curious, what was it that got you so excited about the opportunity to talk about training and onboarding project managers?



Paul Silliman

Yeah, it seems to be a not forgotten field, but just from my experience, from what I've seen from these trade shows and small groups I've sat in, we spend so much time on certifications, equipment, software, things to get that initial Mitigation done, but there's not a lot of talk about the after. If you're a full service restoration company, you're not just drying a house, you got to put it back together. And it seems to be a big disconnect between the services you offer to get out there fast, getting there overnight, starting to drying within 24 hours, all these great things. But when it comes to the rebuild side, it gets done when it gets done, and it's just almost like a whole separate part of the house that nobody talks about. But yet we're finding in studies that customer satisfaction, overall gross profit, all these issues people have with reconstruction kind of get overlooked.



Paul Silliman

Not to mention a lot of companies don't even do reconstruction anymore. So that's a whole nother service line that people aren't bringing onto their business because they don't have training, don't know how to go about it. So it's something that I've seen at a couple of different companies as well as I dealt with as an adjuster. And it's simple communication things and simple trainings that people put a lot of effort into on the Mitigation side that just gets overlooked. So it was something that jumped out to me. I'm like, we got to have conversation about this.



Travis Parker Martin

That's awesome. I'm really excited to dive into this today. Howdy to Wendy and Matt and everyone else that's joining. Great to see a few other Canadians here. I won't spill the beans between Paul and I, which one of us is Canadian. Probably the way one of us pronounces the word process or process might give it away, but we'll see. So anyways, really excited to dive into the topic today and I think we should get going because Paul, you just highlighted something that we are going to explore in depth, which is what we're calling this like Project Manager Resource Disparity. Right. When you think of all the energy that goes into training and equipping staff on the mitigation side versus the reconstruction side, I think there's a huge missed opportunity there that we're going to dive into. So I'm going to share my screen and we'll get started here.



Travis Parker Martin

Maybe flip over here. Paul, someone giving you a thumbs up. Looking good. Looking good. All right, that's great to hear. Okay, so we are going to dive into basically we're going to talk about a lot of things, but the big takeaway is how you can rapidly onboard project managers in the restoration industry. Because we said this in the event description, we're going to say it a lot today. If you have a reconstruction problem, chances are you have a project manager problem. And if you have a project manager problem, chances are you've got a training and equipping project manager problem. Not always, but I think by and large, if we focus on training and equipping project managers, then the quality of the reconstruction job and everything that entails is going to go up. And so that's really what we want to focus in today, is getting in at that ground zero.



Travis Parker Martin

How do we train and equip project managers better without taking weeks and months and quarters to do it? And so our outcome for you attending this webinar is that you are going to discover, if you're not aware of it already, this Project Management Resource Disparity, what does that even mean? We're going to dive into it really soon and then you understand the consequences of it, how us not properly resourcing project managers in the restoration industry is leading to a bunch of different downstream problems that are definitely surface level, definitely cause headaches for restoration companies every day of the week. And then, okay, problem is clear, what do we do? And we want you to walk away with step by step guidance on how to develop a world class onboarding program for project managers faster than you ever thought possible. And so we're really excited to dive in just to give a little bit of background about us.



Travis Parker Martin

So starting on the right, I'm Travis. In addition to being one of the co founders of Knowhow, I'm a co author of the book *Why Workers Quit*, which maybe you have read, we did a big survey of 400 workers in the restoration industry. Why do they quit their job? Why did they stay? What makes a good team culture. Also co authored this book, which my zoom screen. There you go. If I hold it right in front of me, you can see it delivering five star restoration experiences. This one is going to be particularly relevant to our conversation today because we analyzed 1001 star reviews of restoration companies across the United States, did this big data analysis. What are the reasons that projects fail? And surprise, project managers came up once or twice, and so we're going to dive into that a little bit more. I'm also a project manager myself, and I've played that role a lot of the time.



Travis Parker Martin

So really excited to dive into this discussion. But when it comes to industry expertise and industry know how, that's why I'm so glad to be joined by Paul. Paul, tell us a little bit about your background.



Paul Silliman

Yeah. My name is Paul Silman. I work here at Knowhow. I've been the restoration industry for about ten years. Started as a Mitigation technician, moved into Estimating, ended up running a mold remediation division, was an assistant MIT manager as well as a project manager for Large losses, was an adjuster, worked at Contractor Connection, kind of been all around the industry, worked every different angle from it. So it's been able to see it from a management side, from a worker side, from an adjuster side, someone writing the check. So very excited to dive into this one.



Travis Parker Martin

Awesome. All right, so, hey, we're just going to go ahead first right in. We've talked about this Project Manager Disparity. Let's dive in a little bit more in depth. This is called the Project Manager Resource Disparity. And as Paul and I were working through this webinar, we said, man, I think we've uncovered something really big here. And so what this talks about is a misalignment between all of our industry energy resources training that we currently see in the restoration industry and then what the customer experiences. And so right now you can see this. Let's just focus on industry resourcing. So I'm talking about software for the industry, I'm talking about training, I'm talking about certifications. You don't have to throw a stone very far to hit someone who trains watertechs estimators. We have done training for watertechs and estimators ourselves on the Mitigation side because it's such a vital and important part of the role.



Travis Parker Martin

Yet from the customers perspective, that is maybe what, Paul, the first two, three, five days of the entire job. Tell me what you think, Paul.



Paul Silliman

Yeah, I mean, especially on some of these larger losses, your Mitigation may be max the first two weeks, then your reconstruction could be the next six months after that. And what we've noticed is there is just a large amount of training and resources that goes to that first two weeks, but not that much that goes to the next six months after leaving bad reviews, unhappy customers. And it's something that we kind of accidentally stumbled upon and uncovered, and it's quite interesting when you look at it.



Travis Parker Martin

So let's look at this next slide, because that's exactly what Paul is talking about. So in that first column on the left hand side, again, industry resourcing, were just looking at this. A lot of good emphasis goes towards training and equipping. The mitigators, the estimators, but from the customer side, that's a very small percentage of the overall job. The other side of the job, the reconstruction side, this is what can go on for weeks or months or dare I say, sometimes year plus. Yet we don't put the same level of energy and emphasis on training and equipping project managers. So from our perspective within the industry, all of the energy or I shouldn't say a lot of the energy is going towards training and Mitigating or sorry, the Mitigation side. But from the customers side, that is a very small piece of the overall pie.



Travis Parker Martin

And I can tell you, from my experience, having personally read 1001 star reviews of restoration companies across the United States, very few of them said the Mitigation side was a train wreck. It went awful. Thank goodness the reconstruction team came in and cleaned everything up and did a great job getting me back to normal. They almost all either they complained about the entire process or a very common theme is the Mitigation side was great, but what a nightmare getting my house back to normal. Paul, you must have seen this a million times over the course of your career. Yeah.



Paul Silliman

And especially being someone who did sales in this as well as you sell it as a full package, we're here to restore your house from the front end to the back end. And normally, it's a pretty smooth transition at the first, you're the heroes. You're there to save me on my worst day. But as probably everyone on this call knows, is you're a hero. Day one, day two. Why is the house not fixed? So how do you set yourself up for success? Not to mention, we're in a digital age. Anybody who's buying something on Amazon will spend more time reading reviews before buying that \$5 phone case. But yet it's the same thing in your business. How do you make sure that you're giving that service level agreement, you're giving that customer care across the entire timeline?



Travis Parker Martin

And when Paul and I were chatting about this webinar, he had said, travis, you've read all of these reviews. They are complaining, ultimately, whether they say it explicitly or not, the majority of the time they're complaining about the project manager. The project manager and their ability to do a high quality job and everything that goes along with that. Right. And so ultimately, if things are falling down, if they're breaking down, it's a project management issue. And I wanted to highlight a few reviews that really caught my eye that speak to this problem. So this was one review, I think, that this was, of a restoration company in Michigan. Let me just read this to you. It took this company five months to do an 80 square foot vinyl replacement and flood repair. I literally called them weekly for two months before it got done. Very slow service.



Travis Parker Martin

But of course, their billing is prompt and they're happy to threaten me with legal action on Christmas Eve. Paul are these stories like these not a dime a dozen?



Paul Silliman

Unfortunately, they're not. This kind of thing happens way more than it should, and it's relatively simple fix. This isn't, oh, they weren't certified, or you don't have the most up to date equipment, or your in circle didn't get it. No, this is communication. This is training those soft skills and getting a project manager to understand what's actually happening in the job. Homeowners don't like hear bad news, but they can at least take bad news. If it's not given, though. These are the kind of reviews you can get from it.



Travis Parker Martin

And we're going to talk about that because, hey, I don't think any of us wake up in the morning excited to deliver bad news and excited to gather resources and materials and technicians and subcontractors as if you're trying to gather cats. No one likes doing that. But how well does the company train and equip a human who has human emotions and human likes and dislikes to be able to do the hard job of project management? When it comes to the reconstruction side, the companies that invest in that, surprise, we didn't see a lot of them on the list. What we saw were the ones that left a vacuum when it came to those skills and abilities of just the project management side. Unfortunately, the customers were the ones that paid the price. Here's another review. This one was from Nashville, Tennessee, and said this I was told the project was going to take 15 days, and I figured at most that would double.



Travis Parker Martin

Oh, no. It was nearly six months before the project was done. They put up new drywall in the ceiling without insulation, and they completely ruined my furniture by not putting any blankets or protection. Do not use this company unless you want to be a project manager, contractor and account manager. I'm certain. Unfortunately, some of these reviews may hit a little closer to home than we would like to see. Paul this is not some theoretical exercise. These are real customers complaining about real jobs and poorly, and it's the real homes that are affected by it.



Paul Silliman

Absolutely. And it's something that could have been mitigated by having processes and procedures in that training. Because what we find a lot of times in my own experience is a lot of the project managers we have come from new construction. They had general contracting businesses. They're not from the restoration industry. If you have good, well trained water techs, they have the ability to talk to a homeowner of, hey, this is a cat three loss. This came from beyond the trap on the toilet. We're going to be gutting. This for sanitary reasons. This is what we're going to do. This is the equipment and a homeowner, whether they like it or not. They're informed, they understand the process. But when it comes to reconstruction, sometimes it turns into, we're here for you. They have a great experience with the mitigation. They expect that experience to continue.



Paul Silliman

But if you don't have somebody who understands restoration, which if it's a new construction GC, they normally don't, because I've sat in a couple of these different shows I've been at lately, and there's a lot of debate now on whether new construction pricing and exactimate versus restoration. The one key thing missing is there is a homeowner in this house. This isn't a blank slate. These aren't track homes that have nobody in it where a drywall guy can go in at 08:00 at night and throw things up. No, there's furniture in the house you got to put coverings down. Sometimes there's supplements that are needed. There's additional work homeowner wants to do. There's a lot of conversations that need to happen. But being able to set the premise of this is how we're going to do it. This is when things are going to be done.



Paul Silliman

Here's a schedule I'll share. Simple, soft skills that could basically eliminate these reviews and set up a homeowner for success instead of instantly starting a battle between they said it take well, this one right here, it said it take 15 days and it took six months. Normally there's something in there that if you had some set training, you had some soft skills, the ability to communicate and know they just had a colossal loss. They're not calling you because they feel like remodeling and they want a new kitchen. No, their kitchen just got ripped out. So how do we help walk and shepherd that homeowner into the repair phase and not just dump somebody on them, never hear from them again? And then you got a homeowner sitting on their hands not knowing what's happening.



Travis Parker Martin

Yeah, it's so true. And I want to make a quick plug. And so if you have not read this book that we put together delivering five star restoration experiences like I said, we analyzed 1000 bad reviews and we looked, hey, what are the common denominators here? And we just broke them into categories. Roughly 38% of them were poor communication. Some of it was poor quality workmanship, delays, customer service. And we just went down the list. We said, here are some examples of the reviews that talked about poor communication. Here are the lessons learned. We worked with some real top names in the industry. We worked with the people from Violand. Mark Springer, Dan Cassera. And so I encourage you fivestarrestore.com, you can get that ebook for free, totally free. And so if you haven't already, check it out. If you have downloaded it. We released it maybe about a year plus ago, I would say it's a great refresh, still just as relevant as ever.



Travis Parker Martin

And so make sure to check that out and download it if you haven't already. Paul, you talked about, hey, just the myriad things that can go wrong on a job site. And even the most trained, talented project manager will say, like, hey, things go sideways often, like restoration, reconstruction. It is chaotic. Lumber prices are going up. All of a sudden, we're in this maybe global recession. There's a pandemic. The homeowner is upset. There's so many variables that even the best project managers will have bad days and will say, hey, it was just chaos today. I think a good project manager looks into the chaotic environment and has the skill of bringing order to that, especially for the customer who has never been through this situation before, doesn't know what to do. For a talented project manager to look at them and say, here is the path forward, this is what's going to look like, hey, I just got word we got some delays coming in.



Travis Parker Martin

This is how it's going to affect you. That ability to be a steady hand on the ship is something that a lot of companies, they don't necessarily hire for. And frankly, their onboarding process for project managers doesn't do anything to instill confidence that this is going to be you are going to be able to create order out of chaos because the onboarding process itself is chaotic and so it's like baptizing people in chaos. Does that make sense? Paul, are you tracking with me here? Absolutely.



Paul Silliman

And to be honest with you, I've worked at a couple of restoration firms where there was no onboarding it's, hey, thanks for coming on board. Here's 15 of these files that have been ongoing for six months. We got to get them cleaned up. Go make it happen. But it's that approach that we're taking to a Mitigation technician where it's, we need to get them on board. You need to learn how to talk to customers. We need to get you certified. But with project managers, it's, hey, go find some subs. We need some drywall work done. Go make it happen. And there's a big issue there, and I don't think enough people are talking about it because as we saw in our study we did at the beginning of the year, the state of the industry training and onboarding is the number one thing people are looking for.



Paul Silliman

The second one is, how do we get paid faster? Well, if you have someone who's waiting to get punch list items done or not communicating with a homeowner, not listening, not getting things done in time, it's going to cause delays to get money in house. So it all lines right up with each other.



Travis Parker Martin

So let's explore that a little bit more. When you fail to resource and train project managers properly, when we fail to do that as an industry, what are the consequences of it? And so here there's some top line surface level pains here, and there are some downstream level pains as well. But Paul, let's talk about this first one. Delays occur. I mean, when we were crunching the numbers for this book, we saw this time and time again, right? It's like these two reviews we saw, hey, I expected 15 days. It ended up being six months. Paul, help us understand what is the line between project managers that have not been trained properly and a customer complaining about delays in their one star review on Google?



Paul Silliman

A lot of it's just simple soft skills. I was always a big fan of Under Promise and Overperform. So if you're coming in saying it's going to take 15 days, but you know, multiple trades are involved, that means you're working and aligning people. Things happen. Kids get sick. Someone may not show up in a day. But how do you communicate that to a homeowner? Do you have pre built email templates? Are you giving them a timeline up front? Are you teaching how to deal with subcontractors? A lot of times these are management roles. Do you know how to hire and fire a subcontractor? Do you know how to send that timeline to the homeowner? How to paint that schedule? Or is it just, hey, I'll give you a call when my guys are ready and we'll get started again? The biggest key to this whole thing is there are homeowners in this house.



Paul Silliman

So if I got to go take my kids to school at 09:00 A.m., and you're calling me telling me, oh, I got a drywaller that I need you to let in, you just instantly added a whole new level of stress to a homeowner when you could have sent that the day before. You could have lined things up. You could have given a timeline, just communicating with that homeowner to help if those delays do come up, how do we make sure that's across? Do you have pre templated, emails? Do you have things to send to them? Just having all that information ready to go.



Travis Parker Martin

That communication piece is so big, and actually it channels really nicely into the next point about SLA targets. What these carriers want is, hey, when were you on site? Did you check the box? Right? You have to improve your communication to make sure they always know exactly where you're at along the journey because they have their own goals that they're holding you to. Paul, help me walk through. I've chatted with project managers that just say, there's so many boxes to check, so many things to do. And a lot of it was they didn't get the why explained to them on why it's important or how to do it properly. And it just feels like one of a million things that are just falling off their plate. But it's the company that pays for it, isn't it?



Paul Silliman

Correct. And it's documenting if you have a whole house fire that you're doing work in and you have to have generators running because you don't have power yet. Well, if you're not communicating that to the adjusters to the homeowners, there's delays. That means the insurance company now is having to keep the homeowner in assisted living for a while. Now you're invoicing for a generator for three months longer than anticipated. Do you have the ability to document that? Do you have the ability to say, this is our reason why? Or is it just, hey, here's an extra 25 grand on my invoice. I need it paid tomorrow. Normally, that's where the fights start with adjusters. It's not, hey, we had project delays. We found that our wiring was burnt further. We had to pull permits. Here's our permit inspection. Here's our schedule for electricians. Here's a supplement.



Paul Silliman

We need to add to this due to being able to communicate that solves so many issues in keeping things on target.



Travis Parker Martin

Yeah, absolutely. We've talked about this next point. Soft skills. I was listening to our friends at Blue Collar Nation. Eric and Larry just dropped a great podcast episode, I think, today on training project managers with Tom from Large Loss Mastery. But he brought up this great point that happens so often where you've got a high caliber technician and you want to reward them, you want to move them up their career. So just natural. Why don't we promote them to project manager? Paul, the transition is not that simple usually. Is that correct?



Paul Silliman

No, that's correct. And sometimes you get technicians who are dynamite in the field. But being able to go out and work every day is one thing. Being able to manage not only crews, but homeowners expectations is a whole nother skill set that seems to be neglected. How do you get those soft skills? How do you teach someone how to communicate those issues, how to talk to a homeowner, how to set yourself up for success because nobody wants to come to work with 30 delays in projects. You got homeowners texting you at 09:00 at night yelling, nobody wants any of that. Not only that, it's affecting your bottom line. Any more of these delays in your projects, more material and labor out, now you got subcontractors that are getting delayed in payment. It causes a snowball effect that really weighs down a business.



Travis Parker Martin

Let's keep the ball rolling when it comes to talking about affecting your bottom line. Paul, you tell me you've been on a lot more job sites than I have over the years. How many times can a subcontractor show up on a job site without the right materials, without the right work done that they need in order for them to have a productive date before they start heading over to Indeed and seeing what other opportunities there are?



Paul Silliman

Happens all the time, not to mention just subcontractors. You get a project manager who just gets dumped this load of files with these unhappy homeowners. You give that two months and they're like, well, the guy down the street is hiring. I wonder if it's any better than this or I'll just start my own business. Being able to help them become successful and grow in your business by having that culture and being able to encourage that growth is a huge aspect that just seems to get lost outside of technicians and estimators.



Travis Parker Martin

Right on. Yeah. Speaking of the transition, were talking about the soft skills. You mentioned this already. A lot of people will hire a seasoned project manager with almost the same job description. The difference being coming from general contracting, new homes, things like that, versus restoration. And they find that actually it's a lot bumpier of a transition than they were expecting. Paul, when we chatted about this, I think you were telling me, man, there is a huge opportunity here because it just leads to chaos when you're working in an environment that someone's already living in. Tell me a little bit more about that.



Paul Silliman

Yeah, I mean, I spent some time my uncle was a home builder, so in the summers in college I would work for him and these project managers would have crews running eight, nine houses at a time, but they're going door to door of empty skeleton houses. That's not how it works in restoration. If you got two bedrooms affected, a lot of times the homeowner is still there. They have kids, they have dogs, they have personal property in the home. How do you work and manage all that to where you can't just send out four subs and say, hey, they're going to show up when they show up? You have to manage expectations, you have to set schedules, you have to have times, you have to hold the tension to those schedules. How do you make sure to give that five star experience but dealing with a different kind of job site, a lot of guys will come in.



Paul Silliman

It's one thing to put up sheetrock if there's just studs hanging on the wall, but if you have two foot flood cuts in a kid's bedroom, you might have to do things differently. It's going to take longer. It's not going to take an hour or two to come in, throw drywall up. They're going to have to move furniture, put paper and plastic down, protect the floors. It's not like new construction where they're putting all this up. There's no floors installed. You can mess up anything you want because you're going to have someone come behind you. Well, now that subcontractor might be required to clean afterwards, are you making sure the job site is up to par? Are you going to have a homeowner come home with drywall nails and mud all over the place and their five year olds painting on the walls with it?



Paul Silliman

How do you make sure that kind of stuff is taken care. Of make sure there's no sight infractions there's a lot more soft skills involved in restoration than new construction. And that's something I've seen along the years.



Travis Parker Martin

And you're going to hear us talk about this more. I honestly believe that if you fast forward, what does the restoration industry care about in 2025? I think you're going to hear this term customer experience a lot more than you've heard it over the last five years or so. The industry is doing a better job getting trained and equipped for their workers. I would like to think that know how is going to help play a big part in that. But what is going to be the thing that sets your company apart? It's going to be how the customer feels throughout the entire process. Maya Angelo that said, hey, people might not remember what you said, but they'll remember how you made them feel. And so ultimately, when the ball is getting dropped, when communication is poor, when these project managers are not getting trained properly, who feels it the most?



Travis Parker Martin

Well, your bottom line is going to feel it, but it's going to be the customer that, in addition to having the worst day of their life that led to them reaching out to you in the first place, is going to feel like they're being dragged through Helen back over the next 612 months because we haven't properly invested in project managers. And so I want to move on to this. I know we're running a little bit behind time. We got a lot to get to here. And so what we want to talk about is how to train and equip project managers and not just do it the old fashioned way, where, hey, over the next six months, we'll try to teach you all the skills you need to know, and we'll just kind of give you piecemeal. Little nugget here, little nugget here, shadow a person here, figure this out, and you're going to break a lot of eggs along the way.



Travis Parker Martin

We want to talk about a consistent, targeted, structured onboarding. And so we're just going to go through these really quick. But the key is to supercharging your project manager onboarding has to be standardized. Paul was talking about general contractors coming in with maybe some helpful knowledge, but maybe some bad habits they have to undo. So how can we wind those back and make sure whether you're a general contractor, you've never project managed before, or you're a tenure veteran at a different company that has a different way of doing it, that everyone is singing from the same hymn book and knows the right way to move things forward. We also want to talk about supercharging your project manager onboarding. You need to make sure that training does not just exist in this, like, four, six week, eight week window at the start of the job. And then, hey, I hope you took good notes because you're going to need that for the next two or three years.



Travis Parker Martin

If you ever get caught in a gym, that's not the right way to do training. Talking about just in time training, making sure that everyone has access to the information they need, when they need it most. And some people, they might not be comfortable asking those questions. And so for you to be able to give them the information they need on the spot, they can reference it on their phone, on their desktop. It's going to be a critical tool to make sure that you weren't just tossing a bunch of theory at them in their early days. But it's actually grounded in reality, and they know it because, hey, when rubber hits the road and they're on the job site and they need that information that they can't remember, they can quickly access it. We talked about this, the why, right? I think talking about these SLAs and missing some of these requirements, a lot of times it's because it was just not explained to them why it's so important.



Travis Parker Martin

You want to not just have them memorize a bunch of facts. You want them to understand, show your work, so to speak, so that they can be equipped to tackle these things as well. When to do everything, why we do everything, and how we do everything. Paul, what jumps out here when you've seen project managers not trained properly in the consequences of it and what supercharged project manager onboarding could look like?



Paul Silliman

A lot of things that we've already stated, being able to train soft skills. Explain why. There's a big difference between that restoration company and a remodeling company. But also, a lot of these seasoned veterans are now retiring. They're leaving this workforce to where you're now in a spot, to where you need newer, younger people to promote within. You need those project managers. So in today's society, people use Google, they use YouTube. How do you get this into your workers hands for point of need reference? Not to mention one thing that we haven't mentioned here. Most project managers are not in the office. These guys are working on iPads or mobile phones in their truck. That is their mobile office. The old school way of here's, a three ring binder. I want you to sit down, read this, and watch this video does not work. These guys are out and about and on the field.



Paul Silliman

And frankly, if you have a project manager that is sitting in the office, it's probably more to worry about what's actually going on. So how do you get that information? Your company's playbook your expectations a way of doing it in a way that they can access at any point in time in their back pocket, but also while they're out in the field. Because if your project managers aren't out in the field, you have other things to worry about.



Travis Parker Martin

Yeah, it's a great point. All right, we'll go through a few more of these really quick. Paul talked about being out in the field, right? You need to know if your guys are out in the field, if your gals are out in the field, how are they doing things the right way, especially for those new people and the early days? It's really critical that foundation is a solid foundation. And so for you to have that visibility, absolutely critical. And it's 100% possible with the technology that we use today. Also super necessary to have that company playbook for how to power your company. Like we talked about, when you come from different companies, when you come from different industries, it's not standardized. And so we want to say, hey, this is great that you did it this way at your previous company going forward. This is the way that our restoration company does this.



Travis Parker Martin

It's codified here. Take advantage of your workers expertise to help inform the right way of doing things. It helps create buy in, and your quality will probably improve as a result. But it's important that, hey, once we all agree this is the way that we do things here, that it gets followed, and that it's empowering your company and it creates opportunities as a result. Like we said, the customer experience is going to be the difference maker going forward. And so once the hard skills are documented, hey, this is how you do a cat three loss. This is the PPE that you're supposed to wear. This is how we rip out moldy baseboard. That's when you can build on that layer to get to the soft skills. And the soft skills like Paul talked about, that is the difference maker when it comes to customers. And we saw it all over our one star reviews.



Travis Parker Martin

20% of them talked about poor quality workmanship. The rest talked about how things were communicated, how I was, how I felt, how the person responded to me when they were stressed out. Those are the soft skills that you can build on when you have that hard skill foundational layer already built out. All right, this is where Know how comes in. And so basically, where we're going to go from here on out is we've talked a lot about the importance of building a comprehensive, structured, repeatable project manager training. And a lot of you might be saying, hey, great. If we all lived in the world the Beatles lived in, and there were eight days in a week, I might get to that. But in reality, I don't think that I can right now because I've got a million other things on the go. And so that's where Know how comes in is.



Travis Parker Martin

We help you create a playbook for your team in as little as 24 hours. We have hundreds and hundreds of industry processes. I'll tell you right now, it's what, mid April. As of today, we're in about the 700 standardized industry processes. If you go back and rewatch this webinar, in May, that number will be even higher because we are working with some of the best authors in the industry to build out standardized roadmaps for every single role. Every job, big and small, from accounting, human resources, estimating, Mitigation, reconstruction, and it's all there in know how. So you don't have to start from scratch. In a nutshell, Knowhow gives every hire instant access to your company's how to you can see it there. All your departments are equipped with their training pads, their workflow, all the equipment, software. And if it's not yet in know how, we're in the process of building it.



Travis Parker Martin

But of course, your company may do things a very specific way. You just take our templates off the shelf. You edit and tweak them however you see fit. You can add your own, assign it to a worker so they're out to a job site. And when they arrive on site, they know exactly how to use every piece of equipment, what they're supposed to say to the homeowner. It's a standardized playbook for the industry. And so, Paul, this is where I'm really excited. We can talk all day about this, and I'm certain we'd like to, but really it doesn't matter at all if you don't have the ability to actually equip your staff and change that path going forward. So Paul, why don't you show us just what these standardized training project manager roadmaps might look like?



Paul Silliman

Absolutely. So what we're going to do today is a little different from some of the ones we've done previously. I'm going to take you through how to do it right now. We're going to do it live, going to show you how simple it is to actually get this created. So we're going to come over here. We're actually going to create a workflow. Now, what you can do and know how is, let's say you build out that perfect workflow and you're thinking, man, this is perfect. You can save it as a repeatable workflow so we can actually come in here. Got me my project management training. Going to go ahead and import this from a library, which we have these already pre built that anybody can use. So Travis, you didn't know this yet, but you are becoming our project manager.



Travis Parker Martin

This is a promotion. I'm excited.



Paul Silliman

And we're going to go ahead and have you start on the 17th, and we're going to go ahead and get it created. So what we're doing is we're taking one of our pre built project management onboarding, and we're going to simply come in. So on Monday, Travis is actually going to come in here. We're going to come in, say, okay, you're going to learn how to onboard an employee, where you're going to learn our company's vision, our values, our rules, simple things, how to file an expense report. So if you go down to Home Depot, you use Lowe's for pros, and you want to figure out how to expense that. We have a step by step process. This way we can come in here on how to identify hazards on a work site, how to set up a construction project, what that handoff from an estimator to a project manager is going to be.



Paul Silliman

How do we know this is an approved scope of work? Here's our documentation to it. Here's our scope sheets. How to lead a project planning meeting. This is a large loss, and you have multiple trades, multiple workers on there. How do you actually plan those simple things? How to lead a tailgate safety meeting if these are OSHA requirements, anything of that nature. How do you run these simple things all the way down? How do you use a respirator if you come across mold? How do you set up a containment if it's needed? I will tell you right now that's a big delay I would find is I'd have a project manager out there. Mind you, this was a flood. We do our best to mitigate everything. Sometimes it's hidden under that cabinet. We didn't see it or couldn't get to it. So when they go to pull a cabinet out and you see mold, what do I do?



Paul Silliman

I've had numerous project managers that just start ripping things out and they got fans and Dhues in there. Next thing you know, we got ourselves an issue. How do you document that? How do you record payment from a customer? Best ways that you can create that.



Travis Parker Martin

Playbook, this is stuff that happens within. We have built this out, but this is that ground floor layer. And the workers that I've chatted with, they have various skills and abilities that they are able to that they're coming into their job with. And so for you to be able to say as a manager, hey, know how team, thanks for creating that foundation. My staff actually, they don't need to. This new project manager, he's actually great with the soft skills. And so we don't need that soft skills investment necessarily, but doesn't have a background on the mitigation side. And so a lot of that technical knowledge of, hey, what are you supposed to do? What are the different types of water damage? What's the PPE that you're supposed to wear? Things like that. Those are the things that you can bob and twist and weave. Emphasize this a lot.



Travis Parker Martin

Emphasize this a little. Take this out. As the worker is going through the training, you can say easily, hey, actually I think that we need to spend a little bit more time on safety because I see that the knowledge is not there. But this is something where that worker, whether they are out on the job site or in the office, they have the ability to pull up this training. And it's just a crystal clear roadmap. And so you've got the ability in less than 24 hours to set up new project manager Travis or Paul or whoever with that roadmap of the path forward, but it doesn't end there. You're able to continue to invest in them as they go forward. Paul, you're going to show us what that experience is like for a worker when they're out on the job site?



Paul Silliman

Absolutely. This is something I just really wanted to hone in on as being able to continue that education. So if you're sitting out here and you got something in your back pocket and you're sitting there going, how do I clock in on proven jobs? Well, instead of waiting for a safety meeting going through, now somebody can simply pull this out of their back pocket and have a step by step guide on how to get those simple answers, the ability to share that with teammates. So if this is a project manager and he has subs that are working on you guys' books, you can now share this with him just in a simple text message, but also gives the ability to actually have that step by step guidance out in the field. Where am I actually clicking? What is my next step? Where am I actually going to add in the date and time I'm clocking into this job to where?



Paul Silliman

Now instead of that project manager who you just gave a huge file load to, who's trying to work with homeowners, trying to well, he might have forgot to clock in or he may not have logged things in encircle or different software. Now you can give them that ability to find exactly where to go, what to put in and how to get that information right there on site. And then once he gets that information he needs, he can simply search for it, come through, market complete, and move on to the next task. That's where know how brings a lot of horsepower, especially in this industry because even if you have a great new construction GC or a new project manager that comes in, probably never seen restoration software a day in his life or everyone's favorite one, I'll lean into this one. I have had some of the best project managers I have ever worked with, but when their week came up to be on call, oh, just everything under the sun would happen because they don't know what happens at a loss at midnight.



Paul Silliman

They don't know how to disperse people. So now you can have the ability of having that playbook of what questions do you need to answer? If he's on call, how are you answering it from the call service? Be able to go down this list and eliminate that stress? Do you have the actual loss address? Do you have any contact information? Is there a gate code to get in to be able to have all this information right there on site so that they can simply come in and say, okay, I'm going to call out my teams now. Okay, well, I have my team ones on a job already. My backup team, we're going to need to give them a call. You can even plug in phone numbers on here. You can set this up however you would like to be able to call in homeowner and give them that information, be able to relay what's happening to your team that you're sending out at midnight.



Paul Silliman

Call the Insured, let them know, hey, I got a hold of my guys. They are heading to the office now. It's about a 20 minutes drive for them to get to the office. I googled it. It looks like it'll take them 20 minutes from the office, so we should be there within an hour. That right there will save you more headaches than anything alive, which I know most people listening is, I'm preaching to the choir. But when you have people who aren't your MIT manager or your people that handle this day to day, how do you get that information to them? So with know how, we're able to give that simple guidance to be able to get them in, hey, go to your CRM. You need to hit certain touch points. Are you going in and verifying that they're going to be able to monitor is the homeowner even in the house?



Paul Silliman

Having that information is absolutely key, especially for people that are on the reconstruction side. They don't deal with the emotion of my house is six inches underwater. They deal with, okay, everything's ripped up and I have to put it back together. So how do you pass that information along and give those steps in something that's designed for a mobile phone, tablet and to be out and used in.



Travis Parker Martin

The field and hey, I'll speak from experience here in our company, we have onboarded I've personally onboarded a handful of people since the start of the year. And I remember when we first started onboarding people before we used Knowhow. Just the stress of a manager. I got to do a good job. I got to make sure that they have all the information they need to succeed in their role. It's just going to be I'm excited at the capacity that this person is going to eventually bring, but, man, the path to get there is going to be a huge tax on me. And if I don't do a good job, it's our customers, it's the team. Those are the ones that are going to experience consequences of it. Now I get excited to use know how to onboard new staff in know how to see. Obviously we like our products so much, we use it ourselves.



Travis Parker Martin

But just the confidence that comes from knowing, hey, there is a crystal clear roadmap for this role that has already been defined. I can tweak it a little bit if I want based on the skills and expertise of the person. But actually the more standardized the better because I just want every project manager in the company to know that they have gone through the same training, they have the access to the same resources on their phone. A new situation comes up and it doesn't matter how experienced that new person is, they are going to have the same answer in front of them. And for me as a manager that's onboarding people to know that I don't have to reinvent the wheel. The answers are already there, the predefined path is already there. And you saw it with Paul, it took less than five minutes to set it up.



Travis Parker Martin

Travis's new onboarding path and to have that all predefined ready to go, broken down into this is what I'm learning today, this is what I'm learning tomorrow, this is what's due, when and for Paul to always have visibility as my manager, in this case, hey, Travis is 20% complete. Travis has fallen behind here. Talk about being able to train and equip workers at scale without compromising quality. And so what I want to do now is I want to shift over and just talk, just open things up for question and answers. And so we've got the opportunity to answer any questions you have, but again, you got to experience this for yourself. In my mind, onboarding has always meant stress and work and the fact that know how takes so much of that away without compromising on quality. But frankly I think increasing the quality of the output is remarkable.



Travis Parker Martin

And so you can see it for yourself. Paul is heading to a conference later this week, but you can meet with Paul tomorrow, zero to productive.com and we could have you set up to onboard a new project manager as early as Monday. If not, hey, I mean if you want to start them on Friday, you can start them on Friday, but that's ready to go. But I want to answer any questions anyone has as well, anything that we can clarify about the system. This project management resource disparity, I think it's a really interesting concept that I want to explore a little bit more. And so if you want a copy of this webinar, we'll send it to you. If you had to tune out for a portion, it doesn't matter. As long as you signed up for this webinar in the next few days, you'll get a copy of the video in your inbox and otherwise yeah, send some questions now in the chat if you've got them, we would love to field those, but if not, zero to productive.com.



Travis Parker Martin

And you can equip your project managers. And again it's worth saying we talked a lot about project managers today, the water mitigation technicians, estimators, things like that. We've got training roadmaps for all of them. So quick question for Wendy, I'll just read it out here. Where are we finding those new PMS, those that are new to projects and have had some training on the PM box or PMPs and what's a reasonable amount of time for new PMS to get familiar with hey, the curriculum and all those required soft skills. Paul, I'll throw that over to you. What are your thoughts on that?



Paul Silliman

Absolutely. And especially in a lot of project managers who have experience most of the time, setting up people, setting up labors, getting the schedule with workers is something they're normally probably used to. But giving that roadmap to say, hey, this is how we want you to email our customers, this is how we want you to approach insurance jobs, this is how we want you to talk to adjusters. A lot of project managers normally take about a month to eight weeks to get up and going. If you get that SOP in their hands, you get them a guide of how you want things done. You can get them cut that in about half. There's nothing that says you can't have them now. Are they going to be perfect? No. We're still working with humans, but getting that information in their hands so that they can slowly start driving that satisfaction, there's nothing that says you can't have a good project manager up and running in two weeks, three weeks max, depending on their skill level coming in.



Paul Silliman

But what we're trying to do is help create that. Everyone wants to talk about unity. I'm blanking on the word I'm thinking now, but team culture is a big thing now. Well, a lot of times these new construction or these GCs you're bringing in, they know a lot about home building. Don't know much about drying it or dealing with it after a flood. But they may be able to share some insights with your Mitigation text on hey. If you staple a certain way when you remove these baseboards, if you can pop this nail out, I can reuse them. Simple things of when you remove a cabinet instead of just ripping it out with a crowbar. If you were able to detach a countertop or move this a certain way, we can rebuild the boxes, things of that nature. Now you have someone with that expertise that can now help build out those playbooks and have that conversation to where instead of mitigation is one side, reconstruction is the other, and nobody talks to each other.



Paul Silliman

Now you're building that team culture where everybody's on board. So when you do get a large loss, a school flood, a hotel flood, you can bring in your project managers and subs who don't deal with a dryout every day and be able to send them just quickly hit a button. Here's our day one Mitigation, here's how to use dehumidifiers. Now they can be part of that team and help, but also now you have a second set of eyes on a job. So you have your reconstruction guys helping with the Mitigation, but now they can help scope out a job to where they may be able to turn to a MIT manager or start scheduling that rebuild, saying, okay, I see what we're doing here. We're doing two foot flood cuts around. This is a commercial structure, so we're going to have insulation in the bottom sills there.



Paul Silliman

We're going to remove all that. I can start working on suppliers, I can start working on subtrades. Now you're building that line of communication with that customer and can help streamline that process, that's just going to help you win all the way around.



Travis Parker Martin

Awesome. Yeah, absolutely. To speak about the timeline, we've seen customers say, hey, that onboarding from zero to productive without know how takes about twice as long as it does with know how. And so just because, again, it's structured, it's defined. I always know when I log into work what I'm going to be trained up on today and what I'm going to get tomorrow. We've really worked hard to build a system that speaks the language of younger workers, millennial and gen z workers, so that, hey, they digest it. The information lands with them, it resonates with them. But again, you've got that just in time. I'm out on the job site. I don't really remember some training tools that have been out there in the past. Really hard to access when you're out on a job site in the moment. We've built offline access with know how, the ability just to, hey, I saw you worked on this process last week, just a little reminder, this is what it looks like.



Travis Parker Martin

And so all that to say, we're finding that the training time that gets cut down by about 50% because of just the training roadmaps and the ability to have structured repeatable training processes for all your staff.



Paul Silliman

Yeah, and I'll throw another example out there for you, Wendy, because that was a really good question. Is having the ability of just having that information to have someone be able to search it? If you get a project manager on a job and the house is built before, I think, was it 76, do they know they need to go and do lead testing or asbestos testing? If it's the nine by nine VCT tiles, do you know, like having that ability of when you do see mold in an area that was not discovered, do they know how to simply do a swab test to run it down to a lab to get tested? Or what is that step? Or you get a scope that all of a sudden there's a bedroom on there that's not in your initial scope.



Travis Parker Martin

What do you do?



Paul Silliman

Do you just start doing the work and then we'll figure it out later? Or do they have the knowledge to take photos, upload that into your system, reach out to that estimator, say, hey, just an FYI, here's some photos. This was not included in our scope. We're going to need to supplement to this is the adjuster aware, having that clear line of communication.



Travis Parker Martin

So.



Paul Silliman

They know who to go to, when to do it, if they need to make that phone call, or if you want someone like the Estimator managing that, where to go and how to do it by simply just hitting a click, saying this is what I need to do. If there's a supplement on a job, how do I reconcile that with a homeowner? Here's a quick email template I can copy and paste to shoot out to somebody. Having that clear line of sight can just help eliminate those colossal errors you tend to see on job sites.



Travis Parker Martin

Absolutely. So that's great. All that to say, Wendy, I see you have a question there and so we'll send you an email and we'll kind of follow up on some of those questions. Thanks for sharing them. But if you have enjoyed this webinar, or if it was helpful for you, we're going to send out the webinar maybe a day or two from now and so you'll get that in your inbox and please feel free to share it. But if you want to see Know how in action in your company, put us to the test with how easy it is to set up this training for your staff. Zero to productive.com. Also, like I said, if that book sounded interesting, fivestarrestore.com and you can review the analysis of 1000 bad reviews in the restoration industry on behalf of the whole know how team, thanks everyone for joining us.



Travis Parker Martin

Name is Travis and you got Paul here as well, and we hope you have a great productive rest of your week. See ya.