

The logo for Hal Macomber, featuring the name in a stylized font with a blue and red background.

## The Project Reformer's e-Tip of the Week

### 026: **Optimize the Whole**

AEC projects are contracted in ways that usually result in optimization at local or subcontract levels. Consulting engineers manage their work to maximize engineering utilization. Plumbers do what is good for the plumbers. Other performers do the same. Some people say that if we do well with each of the parts, the whole will do well too. That is blatantly not true. And, people on the project know it. Sometimes it takes one group goes slow so that the project can proceed more effectively. However, the incentives are not set up to accomplish that.

Optimizing the whole requires on-going attention. Circumstances change. What appears to be good for the whole at one point in the project may not be so at other points. It takes a recurring conversation and assessment among the many project participants to continue to act for the general well-being of the whole project.

Try asking just one question at each of your coordination meetings:

What is the best we can do for the project in the coming week?

Answer the question in the group setting. Be open to adjust scope, fees, and plans accordingly. As the result, you'll do better for you client and the team.

**The Project Leaders' Studio™**

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