

# HICAPS Highlights

Providing a centralized approach to project management

Winter 2021

## Educating and Improving Our Industry At-Large

Continuous improvement and professional development are an essential part of the fabric that makes an organization great at what it does. HICAPS has long-benefitted from the enthusiasm that our employees have shown in becoming better at the technical and leadership related aspects of their responsibilities. In turn, HICAPS has been honored to share the wisdom we have gained by teaching numerous construction and project management related topics. Our co-founder and president, Dan Hood, has presented on various topics including project controls, critical path scheduling, construction management, and entrepreneurship. This is an important part of both improving our profession at-large and educating prospective project stakeholders on the power of using concepts such as the “theory of constraints” as a means of delivering successful projects that saved time and money.

HICAPS has taught university and technical college seminars, design and construction professional organizations, and specific owner and contractor clients since our company’s founding. In addition to project controls, scheduling software, property condition assessment, and certified user training on public safety communications systems, HICAPS recently began teaching the development of a culture of quality and reimagined our construction claims instruction to focus on what to expect if and when a claim appears likely on a construction project.

Director of Construction Management and Building Diagnostics, Dave Smith, CCM has been instrumental in developing new instructional content and changing our approach to some of our more common offerings such as claims from the client’s perspective. Dave leveraged our experience in developing and implementing quality assurance and quality control



*Education and continued improvement is an essential part of HICAPS’ culture. President Dan Hood attended a Construction Leadership Network conference in Houston in January.*

programs into a presentation with Vice President Daniel K. Hood and Project Engineer Anirudh Chandrasekaran that they have presented at two Construction Management Association of America conferences, multiple presentations to the Construction Professionals Network of North Carolina, and a seminar for Western Carolina University.

The HICAPS Team is honored to provide training to any institution or organization that requests them. Many of the concepts that we teach can translate beyond the construction or telecommunications industries.

For example, all industries should want to develop and/or assess their culture of quality. Critical path method scheduling training can help improve effectiveness of manufacturing, operational resource management, and supply chain management to name a few areas beyond construction. HICAPS welcomes the opportunity to provide these services to you or anyone else that you would think would gain from them. We look forward to hearing your feedback!



## Grins & Giggles

A police officer was interviewing a bank teller after the bank had been robbed three days in a row. The officer asked, “What did he look like?”

The teller responded, “He looked better every time he came here.”

A man is wandering through the desert with his horse and his dog. After several hours under the heat of the sun, the dog sits down and says: “That’s it. I’m not taking another step until I get some water.”

The man gasps and says: “I didn’t know dogs could talk.”

The horse looks at the man and says, “Me neither.”

A retired man went to the doctor and said, “Doc, I ache all over. Everywhere I touch it hurts.”

The doctor replied, “OK. Touch your elbow.” The guy touched his elbow and winced in genuine pain.

The doctor, surprised, then said, “Touch your head.”

The guy touched his head and jumps in agony. The doctor asked him to touch his knee and the same thing happened. Everywhere the guy touched hurt a lot.

The doctor was stumped and ordered a complete examination with full-body X-rays. He told the man to come back in two days.

Two days later the man came back and the doctor declared, “We’ve found your problem.”

“Oh, yeah? What is it?” asked the retiree.

“You’ve broken your finger.”

## The MBA: Is It A Wise Career Investment?

An MBA degree can certainly enhance your skills, but it represents a substantial investment in time and money. Is the sacrifice worthwhile? If you’re contemplating the pursuit of an MBA, consider these factors:

- **Goals.** What do you hope to accomplish with your degree that you can’t do now? Be clear on your expectations before taking the plunge. Are you looking for increased career options, higher pay, or a new academic challenge?
- **Alternatives.** Find out whether you may be able to achieve any of your goals through some other route: training programs, individual college courses, independent reading, etc.
- **Obstacles.** Take an honest look at your career prospects and how an MBA will affect them. If your age has been a barrier to advancement, for example, how will an MBA help you contribute more to an employer?
- **Finances.** Does your employer offer tuition reimbursement or any other kind of financial support for education and professional development? Find out what kinds of loans or other financial assistance may be available to you.
- **Programs.** Not all MBA programs are alike. Do some research to find out which ones meet your specific needs.
- **Advice.** Don’t make a big decision like this without seeking some advice first. Talk to business school officials as well as alumni of the programs you’re considering. Find out as much as possible about how an MBA can change your life and your career.

*“Don’t make money your goal. Instead, pursue the things you love doing, and then do them so well that people can’t take their eyes off you.”*

—Maya Angelou

## Find Greater Passion At Work And In Life

What can you do to be more productive and passionate about your work and your life? Good question. The answer can be found in asking these questions at the beginning of every day:

- Why is it vital for me to involve myself in my work fully and passionately today?
- How can my attitude affect the way I respond to stressful situations?
- When do I feel most passionate: When I’m working with a customer, solving a problem for a family member, working on a project for myself, or some other time?
- Where can I best put my passion to work? With colleagues? Customers? My family?
- With whom do I need to spend time in order to do my best work?
- How can I effectively align my interests and passion with what I have to do today?
- Who am I called upon to be today to best express my passion for life and work?

## What Feeds Your Inspiration?

Where do you find your inspiration? The *Refinery29* website surveyed its readers on where and when they feel most creative. Here’s what they said:

• At night	62%	• Nature sounds	33%
• Daytime	38%	• Salty snacks	52%
• In a coffee shop	35%	• Sweet snacks	48%
• At home	65%	• Running	55%
• Outside	77%	• Yoga	45%
• Inside	23%	• In a group	28%
• Listening to music	56%	• Alone	72%

# Create A Spirit Of Innovation On Your Team

Sparking innovation in a team or organization depends on a number of factors. Concentrate on these to get the most from everyone's creativity:

- **Challenge.** Bored people don't come up with great ideas. Look for tough problems to solve or difficult projects to accomplish—as long as they're not too overwhelming.
- **Autonomy.** Allow as much freedom as possible to get things done. People are more creative when they can make their own choices.
- **Recognition.** Make sure to praise good ideas when you hear them. Even if they don't work out, you'll reinforce people's innovative spirit.
- **Debate.** Encourage open discussion. Don't let meetings run too long or turn into arguments, but do make sure everyone feels free to explore ideas honestly.
- **Support.** Team members should help each other develop their ideas. The more support people feel, the more eager they'll be to make suggestions.
- **Collaboration.** Ideas may come from individuals, but they usually require a group effort to bring to life. Establish common goals so everyone feels a stake in coming up with the best ideas and making them work.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



# How To Compose Emails That Readers Will Actually Open And Respond To

The ability to ensure that your emails get opened and read is becoming increasingly important in today's communication-heavy business environment. You'll boost responses—and your career—by following these tips from the *Fast Company* website for writing subject lines that get attention and action:

- **Don't ask questions.** Phrasing your subject line as a question reduces the open and reply rate, especially if the reader doesn't know you. Recipients may feel put on the spot if they're already busy, and delete your message or save it for later.
- **Get to the point.** Skip personal greetings like "Hi, Bill" in your subject lines. Again, if people don't know you, attempts at familiarity may turn them off. Use personal material in the body of your email, but use the subject line to describe a benefit up front.
- **Use numbers.** Readers tend to trust hard data, so putting numbers in your subject line will usually catch their attention and increase open and reply rates. Metrics offer credibility that most people will respond to.
- **Use capitals.** No, don't go for ALL CAPS in your subject lines, but capitalize key words: "Increase Your Profits" instead of "Increase your profits." This conveys authority and gives your email a more formal tone that recipients will respond to.

## Odd Jobs Of Future Famous Writers

Few great authors spring up overnight. Most work odd jobs while they struggle to create. *The Literacy Site* shares stories of these writers before they became famous:

- **Langston Hughes.** The would-be poet worked as a busboy at a prestigious Washington, D.C. hotel. One day the well-known poet Vachel Lindsay came to lunch, and Hughes worked up enough courage to show her some of his poems. Lindsay was impressed by his talent, which led to him being discovered and going on to lead the Harlem Renaissance.
- **Kurt Vonnegut.** The future author of *Slaughterhouse-Five* and other classics owned the first Saab dealership in the U.S. He went on to serve in the United States Army during the World War II, which had a major impact on his later writing career.
- **J.D. Salinger.** Before breaking onto the literary scene, the author of *The Catcher in the Rye* and other classics worked as entertainment director on a Swedish cruise ship.

## Speed Limit

A state police officer parked by the side of the highway spotted a car driving only 22 miles per hour. He started up, turned on his lights, and pulled the car over.

As he approached the car, he saw the driver was an elderly woman with three friends, one next to her in the front seat and two in the back. "What's the matter, officer?" the driver asked. "I wasn't speeding."

"No, ma'am," the officer said, "but you were driving much lower than the speed limit, and that's just as dangerous."

"But the sign back there said 22," the woman said.

The officer chuckled and explained that 22 was the route number, not the speed limit, which was 65. Embarrassed, the woman apologized and thanked the officer.

Then he peered into the car. "Ma'am, are your friends all right? They all seem a bit frightened."

"Oh, they'll be all right in a minute, officer. We just got off Route 119."

# Welcome To The Newest HICAPS Team Member



*Korey Mullins*

**K**orey Mullins joined HICAPS in August as a Senior Project Manager in our Construction Division. Korey is originally from Texas and graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor's degree in construction science. Korey started his professional career as an Engineer Officer in the United States Marine Corps. During his 14 years in the USMC, he deployed throughout the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

Since 2008, Korey has worked with large design-build contractors building mission critical facilities throughout Europe, Southeast Asia, Hawaii, and the Continental United States. He has built facilities for the Missile Defense Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NAVFAC, and the Department of Energy. Korey lives in Charleston, South Carolina with his wife, Morgan and cat, Bogey. In his free time, he enjoys all types of outdoor activities. Welcome to the team, Korey!



HOOD INFORMATION CONTROL AND PLANNING SYSTEMS

P.O. Box 35165  
600 N. Regional Road  
Greensboro, NC 27425

[www.hicaps.com](http://www.hicaps.com)



## Reflecting On 2020

As the holiday season approaches, we find ourselves reflecting on a bittersweet 2020. This year's events have reminded us to treasure our time together and to cherish those close to us. We are incredibly thankful for those who have helped to shape our business—our team members, business partners, and, most importantly, our clients. The entire team at HICAPS extends their gratitude and wishes you peace and joy throughout the coming year. Here's to a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2021!

