



PROJECT MANAGERS OR BUILDERS Which option is best for you?

On any given week, I typically visit at least five potential project meetings. Basically, the meet and greet is to determine if we as the builder and you as the client are a good fit for each other and if the project is a viable one for each of us.

It's at these meetings where I have a chance to evaluate your knowledge of the process and to see if you are realistic in your expectations, as far as your investment budget and timeline to complete the project is concerned. The range we get on this is no surprise as some have very limited information (at which point we are happy to help) and some have it written down and figured out to the last cent along with a detailed timeline.

Typically, all of the usual questions are asked or brought up in the two-way interview process, but the one that I find rarely gets asked and I feel is one of the most important (especially in the renovation market) is, "Who will be coming into my home while I'm not there?" What I mean by this is, what type of firm are you thinking about working with? In the growing and popular business of home renovations, there are many types of contractors to navigate through. Everything from the graduates of the renovation TV shows who think, 'That looks easy, let's do that,' to project management firms, to actual builders.

The first usually go by the wayside after a year or so once they've figured out that it's not quite as easy as it appears on TV. Unfortunately, they usually leave a few disappointed clients on their way out. It is therefore very important to ensure that you carefully review the history of such firms before ever thinking of working with anyone who is as they say in the old west, 'all hat.'

Next, there are project manager firms who perform renovations by making phone calls to a number of sub-trades and then send them to your home to complete the project. This model can and does work but is better suited for new builds and large projects where day-to-day life is not affected by their performance or those of their sub-trades.

However, if you are doing a major renovation to your home, what you want is to find an actual builder who has their own trusted employees who come and do the actual work and subcontract the specialties to known and trusted sub-trades. In doing this for over 40 years now and having seen a thing or two, my advice to you if you're contemplating a major reno is to ask the question: "Who are you sending into my home to do the work?"



WAYNE
SAGE

Wayne Sage is the owner and President of Harwood Design Builders, a multi-National and Provincial award-winning Winnipeg Design - Build contracting firm and a certified Master Renovator.