

# HICAPS Highlights

Providing a centralized approach to project management

Spring 2024

## Property Condition Assessments

**H**ICAPS' Building Diagnostics Team, led by Manager Jonathan Layton, was called upon to work with the City of Southport, North Carolina to provide Property Condition Assessments (PCA) for all 19 buildings in their inventory.

PCAs are real estate investigations that seek to give clients the details of a building or property they may be purchasing, leasing, financing, maintaining, or evaluating. Investors often use PCAs as a part of their due diligence during a potential acquisition as well, to help manage maintenance and avoid unplanned building costs.

### *The PCA Process*

The industry standard used for PCAs includes four major components:

- Document Review & Interviews
- Walk-Through Survey
- Opinion of Costs to Remedy Physical Deficiencies
- Property Condition Report (PCR)

### *Document Review*

The PCA process begins with a Document Review & Interviews. During this process, the inspector may give the current building owner a pre-survey questionnaire to complete. With the questionnaire responses and the documentation provided, the consultant can also seek out information provided by municipal agencies, such as certificates of occupancy, accessibility surveys, fire code compliance, tests and violations, publicly available documents and, if available, a set of architectural drawings.

### *Walk-Thru Survey*

The inspector visually inspects the property to observe the physical condition of the systems and identify any physical



deficiencies or inadequacies. There are 10 major areas examined during this stage:

- Building Site
- Structural Frame & Building Envelope
- Roofing
- Plumbing
- Heating
- Air Conditioning & Ventilation
- Electrical
- Vertical Transportation (Elevators & Escalators)
- Life Safety/Fire Protection
- Interior Elements

While the areas above may look comprehensive, some areas have specific items listed as Out of Scope from the baseline PCA, such as entering crawl spaces, removing electrical covers, or examining tenant-owned or maintained equipment. By reviewing what is and

isn't covered, there may be some building systems the client feels needs enhanced due diligence. In this case, additional inspections and surveys can be added to this baseline PCA process:

- ADA Accessibility
- NFPA hazard classifications
- Seismic considerations
- FHA Requirements
- Insect/Rodent Infestations
- Mold

### *Opinion of Costs to Remedy Physical Deficiencies*

With the information gathered in the previous two steps, the inspector will compile a list of physical deficiencies and calculate the probable costs to remedy them. The costs of the remedies fall into three categories: Immediate, Short-Term (within 1 year), and long term.

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**HICAPS**

HOOD INFORMATION CONTROL AND PLANNING SYSTEMS

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*True or false?  
In Queensland,  
Australia, it is  
illegal to own  
a pet rabbit  
unless you are  
a magician.*

## True or False?

1. Sloths can move three times faster in water than they can on land.
2. The official drink of Kentucky is bourbon.
3. In Queensland, Australia, it is illegal to own a pet rabbit unless you are a magician.
4. The dot over the lowercase "i" is called a tittle.
5. The mountain lion is the most common wildcat in North America.
6. Obituary writers have their own awards called "The Grimmys."
7. Turkeys (the birds) were named after Turkey (the country).
8. Entertainer David Bowie was the founder of The Society For The Prevention of Cruelty to Long-Haired Men.
9. Honeybees emit a teeny 'whoop!' noise when they bump into each other.
10. The first pair of Nike running shoes was made in a waffle iron.

Answers: 1 - True; 2 - False; Milk is the official drink of Kentucky; 3 - True; 4 - True; 5 - False; Although rarely seen, the bobcat is the most common; 6 - True; 7 - True; 8 - True; 9 - True; 10 - True

## 5 Tips for Future-Proofing Your Business

For leaders, the fast pace of change can be overwhelming, but also exciting. If you prepare and plan accordingly, there is a true opportunity for success when you stay one step ahead. Follow these five tips from *FastCompany*:

### 1. Surround Yourself With a Team That Has a Developed Skill Set

This developed skill set should include strategic thinking, foresight for success, and time management. The days of going into the office and waiting for the phone to ring are over. Your sales team needs to be proactive in developing opportunities and intentional in following them through.

### 2. Evolve With Your Customers

Customers have changed. Your sales staff should adjust and know who they're speaking to. Customers are much more sophisticated and don't have time for a salesperson who is not going to bring them some type of value. They need a salesperson who understands their challenges and provides solutions to make their lives easier.

### 3. Understand The Blurring of Traditional Channels

This is often referred to as omnichannel or "seamless commerce." Essentially, the consumer is eating away from home at restaurants, but also convenience stores and the bakery/deli at their local grocery store. There are so many more opportunities to capture market share.

### 4. Take Advantage of Technology

Technology is a big reason for the rapid changes we are seeing across all industries. It is key to embrace the efficiencies technology can create and use them to your advantage. We have access to more data and insights than ever before. Daily tasks that used to take hours are now available at the click of a button, which provides the ability to have much more informed collaboration with your team and clients.

### 5. Make Your Personal Development a Priority

Most importantly, whether it is reading books, working with a development coach, or taking advantage of programs offered through your company, make the time for continued growth. Just as the teams you manage are always advancing, your responsibility to them as a leader is that you're constantly working to improve as well.

**"Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."**

—Winston Churchill

## Ballpark Anecdotes

With baseball season in full swing, these true stories from the ballpark should bring a smile to any fan's face:

Giants catcher Phil Masi was catching in a game with pitcher Al Javery on the mound. The first three batters all got hits off of Javery's first pitch.

Disgusted, manager Casey Stengel called a conference on the mound. Masi joined Stengel and Javery.

"What kind of pitches has he been throwing?" Stengel asked the catcher.

"I don't know," Masi answered. "I haven't caught one yet."

A reporter was interviewing Yogi Berra about the previous night's game and asked about Berra's two hits. Berra immediately pointed out that he'd actually gotten three hits. The reporter said, "I checked the box score, and it said you had two hits. But that must have been a typographical error, right?"

"Hell, no," Berra replied. "It was a clean single to left."



# Charismatically Speaking

Charisma and the ability to influence people by connecting with them physically, emotionally, and intellectually isn't something you're just born with. You can learn to use it in your personal and professional life by focusing on these areas:

## Physical presence

- Improve your overall health
- Increase eye contact with people
- Develop a firm handshake
- Invest in a good wardrobe
- Stand and walk straight with your head held high
- Learn to smile more often

## Emotional connection

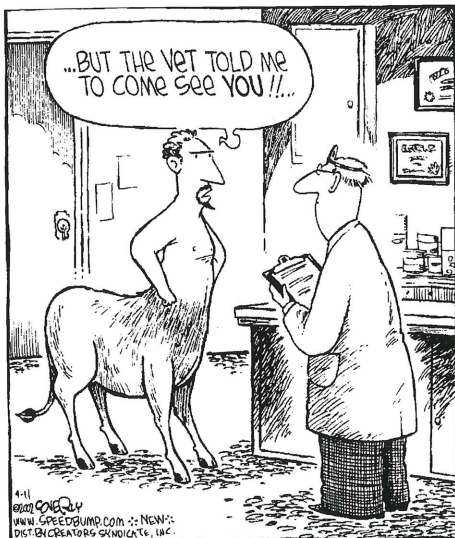
- Improve your oral communication skills
- Improve your writing skills
- Focus on the people you communicate with
- Listen more; talk less
- Become more optimistic in your outlook
- Improve relationships one at a time, starting with those closest to you

## Intellectual image

- Expand your reading material to include literary and artistic topics instead of just business issues
- Take a class in a new subject
- Develop a better vocabulary
- Volunteer to train others in your field of expertise

## SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



# Nurture Your Younger Workforce

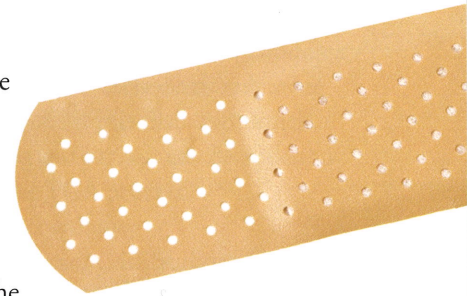
Today's youngest workers are smart and energetic, but often have rough edges that need to be softened. If you're in charge of one or more twentysomethings, follow this advice from the Society for Human Resource Management:

- **Let them fail.** They'll screw up because they don't have experience, but don't lose your temper. Let them know that failure happens and it's not necessarily fatal, as long as they're making a good-faith effort and they learn from it.
- **Be patient.** Remind yourself that your young workers are just starting out. They don't have the knowledge or experience that you've gained over the years. Keep your expectations realistic, and avoid discouraging them as they're learning.
- **Tailor your training.** The same training program won't work for everyone. Assess their experience level. Get a good idea of what they know, and design training that fills in their gaps and reinforces their skills.
- **Take advantage of their strengths.** Find out what they're good at, and start off with assignments that use their talents effectively. They'll gain confidence, you'll look good, and together you can work on expanding their skills so they can advance.
- **Give lots of feedback.** Veteran employees usually know when they're doing a good job and where they need help. Younger employees may not. Keep an eye on them and give them lots of feedback, both positive when they perform well and constructive where they need improvement. When they know you'll hold them accountable, they'll try harder to succeed.
- **Ask for their opinions.** From time to time, ask young employees if your approach to training and management is working for them. They may spot areas you could pay more attention to, or things they want to learn that you've left out. They will improve and they will realize that you value their point of view.

# Putting A Band-Aid On It

The adhesive bandage is commonplace in medicine cabinets and first-aid kits around the world. It was invented in 1921 by Earle Dickson, an employee of Johnson & Johnson. Dickson was concerned for his wife Josephine, who suffered frequent cuts and burns in the kitchen. They originally tried to wrap Josephine's wounds in gauze and adhesive tape, but the dressing usually fell off in a short time. Dickson tried placing some gauze in the center of a piece of tape, and covering the whole thing with crinoline to keep it sterile.

The invention worked so well for his wife that Dickson took some to work to show to his colleagues. The company owner, James Johnson, caught wind of the idea, asked for a demonstration, and ultimately decided the company should manufacture them. Dickson went on to have a successful career at Johnson & Johnson, becoming vice president before his retirement in 1957.



“Business opportunities are like buses, there's always another one coming.”

—Richard Branson



# Property Condition Assessments... *from page 1*

Typically, the prepared opinion is a rough estimate based on the inspector's experience and knowledge. Cost figures are only based on a certain threshold of conditions, and it's only meant to give a general understanding of the condition of the subject property. Some property condition assessment companies, such as HICAPS, have the capabilities and expertise to perform more detailed cost breakdowns, such as true cost estimation. This would include researched price of materials, labor, overhead and profit, etc.

## ***Property Condition Report (PCR)***

The PCA ultimately yields the PCR,

which will include in-depth findings of the document review and walk-through. Also included in the PCR will be the scope of work, including any areas of enhanced due diligence the client has requested. If there were any deviations to the standard guide, it will be included in the report as well.

For each physical deficiency found, the PCR will include photo documentation, a description of the condition, and an opinion of probable costs to remedy. In some reports, a full photo log of the walk-through survey is included.

The quality of a PCA ultimately depends on the people performing the

due diligence. The building inspector's experience and skills are critical to getting the best and most comprehensive answers from the client. Factors such as knowledge of the building type, professional training, certifications, and licenses, and education should be looked at to determine if prospective consultants are qualified. When evaluating someone's PCA qualifications, look at whether they have held a professional license (General Contractor, Architect, Engineer) as well as have experience performing inspections during construction or in a forensic setting.



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## ***Employee Spotlight***

# HICAPS Welcomes Its Newest Project Manager

HICAPS would like to welcome Chris Decoskey, our newest project manager to the team! Chris was born and raised in Northeastern Ohio. He joined the Marine Corps in 1987 and served until 1991. He then entered the construction world in 1992, where he gained a wide array of experience ranging from carpentry to being a heavy equipment operator. He then worked for the Town of Kernersville, North Carolina for 20 years, with the last 10 years serving as a Chief Construction Inspector. Chris is happy to be part of the HICAPS team and is always ready to learn more.

Welcome to the team, Chris!