



Insight

making the **difference**

Speaking the language: Strategic advice for optimal project outcomes

By Brad Richardson, Director Strategy & Growth

HSBC, one of the largest wealth managers in the world, made a US\$10 million translation error in 2009. Its slogan, "Assume Nothing," appeared as a much less inspiring "Do Nothing" in some areas, causing the company to launch an expensive rebranding campaign.

Why bring up this story? Translation is remarkably important - and, as any linguist will tell you, it's not just about words. From cultural sensitivities to technical jargon, communicating between stakeholders who don't necessarily have the same background is as challenging as it is critical.

This is particularly true within project management, where a new model of advisory services brings that exact value to the table: the ability to translate between operation and asset build makes for better overall outcomes. Doing so requires teams that can bridge the divide with both industry expertise and highly specific technical services.

Mistranslation: Missing the mark on project design

Traditionally, when organisations needed to pursue large-scale projects such as building a new facility, an upper-level manager would coordinate with contractors and architects to define requirements and set expectations. However, these executives didn't necessarily know what they should think about when designing a new centre, and they were rarely aware of all of the options available to them.

At the same time, contractors frequently lacked insight into the operational impact of their design decisions. This means they weren't really in the best position to advise these projects from a strategic - and not just an architectural - perspective.

Take health care, for instance. General managers might not know all the flooring options or what has worked particularly well in other facilities. Architects may not consider how different flooring materials will feel to nurses who are on their feet all day long.

For these reasons, organisations no longer need project teams that simply provide manpower and management - they're looking for value-add advisory services that can cross the divide and ultimately lead to better, more effective outcomes.

Bridging the gap

The new model of project management fills this need. Turner & Townsend Thinc has been at the forefront of this movement, organising its teams across three vertices: regions, sectors and highly specialised services.

We employ people from key sectors, some of whom have worked on projects in these industries before and others coming from the front lines as nurses, air traffic controllers, rail administrators and so on. They've grown up in the sector: They understand the industry.

When you bring that into project management teams, you add these deep insights and experience to the highly specialised skills of the leading technical experts. With a large vendor that has specialists in each area and offices across the country, clients can easily assemble a "dream team" that combines the best of each element they require - giving them the flexibility to hire the necessary staff for only the time period required.

Translating: Broad scope, fine nuances

Under this new model of project management, teams provide highly strategic advisory services to achieve better results. Organisations don't need to try to hunt down employees for every specialist position, but they can still enjoy the best of the best for each aspect of their project. Consulting experts become an extension of the client's own team of stakeholders and generalists, forming a high-performance, collaborative environment.

That's the value of a national specialist service - you bring all of the experiences and expertise together to bear in the local environment. You add to your own team the leading industry experts and technical specialists - a dream team that can speak both languages.

About Turner & Townsend Thinc

Turner & Townsend Thinc is the project management arm of Turner & Townsend's property division in Australia, specialising in strategic planning, advisory and management of projects. We advise on and deliver a range of projects across the property sector, including commercial, health, education, Defence, residential, retail, tourism, retirement living and aged care.

We aspire to make a difference - economically, socially and environmentally. We employ and develop the best people in their fields. We value their expertise, just as we value that of our clients. We are genuine believers in the power of collaboration and, time after time, we've shown it delivers exceptional results. We are innovative and operate with initiative and integrity. These attributes are widely recognised.

With national strength, regional knowledge and sector expertise, we have the depth of resources and diversity of skills to provide a holistic approach to servicing our clients and obtaining the best possible outcomes on every project we work on.

We'd be happy to discuss your needs in more detail and how Turner & Townsend Thinc can help.

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