



# What to Consider When Choosing a Design-Build Contractor

Design-Build is a method of project delivery in which one entity – the Design-Build team – works under a single contract with the project owner to provide design and construction services.

FOR THE EXPERIENCE

**MOWERY**



# What to Consider When Choosing a Design-Build Contractor



Design-Build is a method of project delivery in which one entity – the design-build team – works under a single contract with the project owner to provide design and construction services; thus, streamlining the process and, of equal importance, providing for a single source of accountability.

If this sounds ideal for your next project, choosing the right partner makes all the difference in the world when it comes to how smoothly your project runs from start to finish.

Remember, when choosing the Design-Build method, it is critical to select the right firm and make sure it is equally strong in delivering a thoughtful and functional design (that is also compatible with your project scope and program) as well as an efficient and cost-effective construction process that meets your deadline and budget.

When reviewing companies, it's important to evaluate each side (design and construction) separately before coming to a final decision to ensure your satisfaction throughout the entire life of the project. In addition, understanding the firm's experience and process is critical.

Keep in mind the following tips to consider during the selection phase. Bottom line, do your research up front to save time (and potentially avoid a hassle) on the back end.

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# Interview Prospective Design-Build Contractors

It's important to understand who you will be working with and what their approach to the project is.

Consider interviewing candidates and asking the following questions:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>EXPERIENCE</b> – Have them identify three other similar projects that were completed in the last 5 years that includes the same team they would put on your project.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>BUDGET</b> – How do they control costs and manage the budget during the design phase? What does their bidding process look like?</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>TEAM</b> – Find out who is involved and what their role is. Are they staff members or subcontractors?</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>RISK</b> – How does their team mitigate risks? Provide a real-life example and solution.</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>DESIGN SIDE</b> – Review their portfolio and ask questions about how they work with clients during the design phase, how they charge for their design services and how many options you will see. It's important to understand how design is balanced with construction costs.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>PROCESS</b> – What is the process through both the design and building phases?</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>CONSTRUCTION SIDE</b> – Ask about square footage costs, similar industry experience, and what percentage of work is done by subcontractors versus employees.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>INSURANCE</b> – Ask about coverage in the event of an accident or property damage.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>ASK FOR REFERENCES</b> – Ideally, request references for the projects discussed earlier regarding experience.</li> </ul>                    |



**It's important to understand how design is balanced with construction costs.**

## Check References

Take the time to contact the references provided and create a grading scale that takes into consideration the following questions. (Quick Tip – it's better to call them and hear their responses than to email them questions. You may pick up something in the way they respond that could give you additional insight that you won't be able to catch through email):

- ✓ Would you hire them again?
- ✓ Were you satisfied with the quality of the end work/product?
- ✓ What did the communication process look like? Did you feel informed? Were they easy to communicate with?
- ✓ Was the job completed on time?
- ✓ How were change orders handled?
- ✓ Was the cost reasonable? Did they stay on budget?
- ✓ How was the cleanup handled every day? (If business is open during construction)

## Do Your Research

- ✓ Visit completed project sites
- ✓ Call the Better Business Bureau for complaint histories against the company
- ✓ Check licensing

**In the last 5 years, 1/3 of Mowery's projects have been completed using the Design-Build approach.**

At Mowery, we know timeliness matters, and understand that construction projects often need to be expedited and finished quickly. When you partner with Mowery in a Design-Build method of delivery, we can offer efficiencies through a single source of accountability creating rapid delivery, smooth collaboration, cost savings, and perhaps the greatest advantage – a mutual level of trust between the owner and Mowery.

Contact us today to learn more about our approach to Design-Build, and our promise to deliver an exceptional experience.

**Perry Heath**

Director of Business Development

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