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CAD Manager's Newsletter

STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE REAL WORLD

By Robert Green

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Back-to-Basics Boot Camp: Meeting Management Expectations

Learn how to speak to upper management in a way that they understand your needs and, in turn, you'll get what you want.

In prior installments of the Back-to-Basics Boot Camp series, we've discussed the [importance of communication techniques](#) and the [art of implementing standards](#) combined with [running a solid training program](#). And, while all these objectives are crucial to your success as a CAD manager, none of it really matters if you don't know what your senior management team expects of you, right?

So, in this installment of the Back-to-Basics Boot Camp series we'll focus on how to proactively deal with management expectations so you can go on the offensive rather than playing defense. Here goes.



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Expectations Cause Frustration

Roughly 20 years ago, I presented a round table session at Autodesk University focused on how CAD managers could meet management expectations. I came into the session thinking all CAD managers would be willing to have a dialog regarding the expectations from management — only that wasn't the case at all. What I heard was frustration and lack of understanding via comments like these:

- “They have no clue what I do!”
- “How do they think I can get all this done?”
- “These guys know nothing about CAD/BIM and just expect me to have all the answers.”
- “Management has no comprehension what a mess our CAD/BIM standards are in and how little control I have over the situation.”

As the years have gone by, I continue to find these sentiments expressed at almost every CAD manager round table I present. Sadly, things haven't gotten better and understanding management expectations continues to be a problem for many CAD managers.

So, how to get started? Let's explore.

Initial Expectation: Communicate Well (and Often)!

Senior managers are presented with a wide variety of problems from all sorts of people, right? So, it stands to reason that they will appreciate it when the person reporting to them can communicate in a quick, unemotional, and easy to comprehend way, so they can get to work fixing the problems.

Now, let's put this in a CAD manager's context by making the following communication recommendations:

Inform via short reports. Write in a short, executive summary style when creating emails or printed reports. View your writing as a “conversation starter” that grabs senior management's interests so you can confer with them in detail later. It is better to pique senior management's interest with a quick email than bore them with a long, detail laden message that they'll never finish reading.

Bottom line: *KISS — Keep it simple and send one written page max!*

Why: *Because they don't know what you're doing, unless you tell them.*

Update your budget. Whether you do a formal budget or not, make sure you take the time to communicate what you need and any upcoming expenses you feel aren't being accounted for. It is far better to have told management about a financial need ahead of time (even if they don't listen) than to admit you never even asked. If there is a spreadsheet or official format for submitting budget requests, take time to get acquainted with it and use it.

Bottom line: *Those who pay attention to budgets are serious about management.*

Why: *To get the budget you want, you must properly follow protocol when you ask.*

Give great presentations. Whenever you give a talk to a group of managers, make sure you have a few "conversation starter" slides you can use to make key points. Steer clear of long presentations with lots of bullet points — it's better to have fewer, less specific slides. Just like shorter written reports lead to conversations, shorter presentations lead to more innovative and meaningful conversations.

Bottom line: *When presenting to management you can't tell them what they should think, you must bring them around to agreeing with you.*

Why: *Because you want to have an ongoing conversation.*

Review progress regularly. Whether you're reviewing your own performance, other employees, project teams, or how well a new piece of software performs, make sure your management team knows you're reviewing how things are going.

Bottom line: *When management sees you review the performance of key personnel, systems, and teams, they are reminded that you're a manager and are more likely to support your needs.*

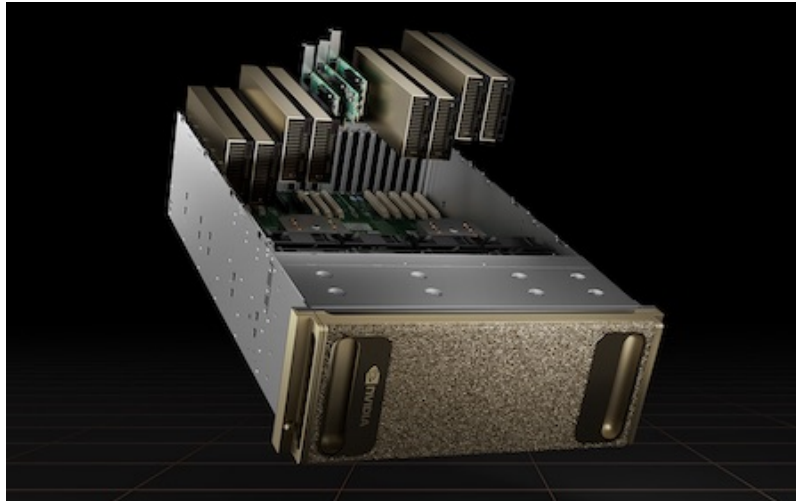
Why: *Because the more often you talk with management, the better your level of understanding becomes, and vice-versa.*

Now that you're talking more often with management, what else do you need to think about? Find out how to "ungeek" your language so upper management understands what you really need to fix problems, how to keep users motivated, and how to stay business-focused. [Find out more >>](#)

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 **onshape**® **WEBINAR** March 23, 2022, 1pm EST REGISTER NOW
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Tools & Resources



NVIDIA GTC THIS WEEK

This week sparks the opening of NVIDIA's annual GTC Conference. The overall message from NVIDIA: The technology behind what NVIDIA is doing continues to break barriers. Get a whirlwind introduction to how NVIDIA technology is driving innovation throughout multiple industries, and watch the opening keynote address with Jensen Huang. [Watch the keynote >>](#)

Happy 3D Day!

Jon Peddie Research reminds us that the third third day of the third week of the third month is officially National 3D Day. It was established two years ago by [3-D Space](#), a nonprofit dedicated to the preservation of stereoscopic imaging through The Center For Stereoscopic Photography, Art, Cinema, and Education, with the goal of recognizing the history and resurgence of the technology and to celebrate the art, science, and history of stereoscopic 3D (S3D) imagery. [Read more >>](#)

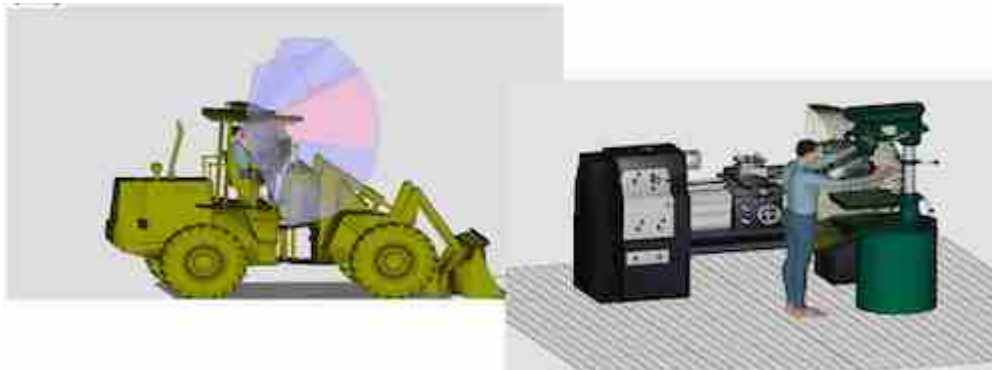
New Cloud-based Manufacturing Software

Vectorworks, Inc. has released its third service pack for the [Vectorworks 2022](#) product line focused on improvements to Vectorworks Cloud Services for all design customers. Other highlights include new storage integrations with Vectorworks Cloud, updates to Datasmith file exchange for a direct link to Twinmotion and support for .gITF within the MVR export from Vectorworks Spotlight. [Read more >>](#)



New Workstations from Lenovo

Lenovo announced the latest addition to its family of entry-level desktop workstations — the ThinkStation P360 Tower (\$1,249) and Tiny (\$1,149). This duo of workstations are designed for engineers and designers that work with clock-speed-driven 3D applications as well as AI practitioners and data scientists working on smaller-sized projects and datasets. Built with the 12th Gen Intel processors and support for up to NVIDIA RTX A5000 graphics, the ThinkStation P360 Tower CPU is up to 58% faster than the previous generation, according to Lenovo. The ThinkStation P360 Tiny is less than 1L in volume and offers performance in a form factor that is 96% smaller than a traditional desktop for mobility, according to the company. [Discover more >>](#)



Human 3D Modeling

NexGen released HumanCAD V6, a digital human modeling solution and HumanCAD MQSW V2. HumanCAD creates digital humans in a 3D environment so that ergonomic and human factor analysis can be performed. It can import and export files in a variety of CAD file formats. HumanCAD-MQSW is a human modeling solution add-in for SOLIDWORKS that creates a 3D digital human within the context of an assembly document. [Learn more >>](#)

Blog Watch: Trends in Manufacturing: Why the Future Is In the Cloud

Dassault Systèmes' blog digs into the disruptive technologies expected to impact manufacturing and the Cloud is at the top of the list. Between forced to remote working due to COVID-19, inexpensive data storage, and more, find out why

manufacturing companies must change with the technology, or they will fail.

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What's New From Our Sponsors



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ARES Mechanical Introduces Support for AutoCAD Mechanical Entities

New features in Graebert's mechanical CAD solution enable users to fully access and modify legacy drawings created in Autodesk's AutoCAD Mechanical. [Read more >>](#)

Sponsored:

DraftSight Insights: Lynn Allen Explains Speedy Block (and Nested Block) Editing in DraftSight!

Blocks are an everyday staple in our drawings — so it needs to be super simple to edit and update them! You'll find that editing your blocks in DraftSight is a breeze (even if they are nested blocks, or blocks in external references). Join Technology Evangelist Lynn Allen as she shows you the powerful "Edit Component" tool in DraftSight. [Read more >>](#)

What's New at Cadalyst



The Radeon Pro W6400 GPU: A Kickstart for AMD in Mainstream CAD Computing?

Herrera on Hardware: AMD's competitive positioning in the market for discrete workstation GPUs looking to improve, but beware a third supplier. *By Alex Herrera*

[Read more >>](#)

Free Resources

Choose the Best Type of Monitor for CAD

When you consistently spend long hours working at a computer monitor, the details matter: adjustability, size, and resolution can affect your comfort and productivity. But with new technologies increasing the number of options available, it can be difficult to determine what would suit you best. To help you select the right monitor for your needs, representatives from four manufacturers discuss important considerations for CAD users.

White Paper

Choose the Best Type of Monitor for CAD

When you consistently spend long hours working at a computer monitor, the details matter. Size, resolution, and other factors can boost — or hamper — your productivity. But with new technologies increasing the number of options available, it can be difficult to determine what would suit you best. To help you select the right monitor for your needs, representatives from four manufacturers shared important considerations for CAD users.

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Cadalyst Pro Tip:

Training Checklist for CAD Managers

Training is an essential task on every CAD manager's to-do list. But with all those little details to remember, preparing a clear, informative training session can ve overwhelming. Use this handy checklist from CAD management expert Robert Green to help you be successful.

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