Bipartisan support isn’t something that comes easy these days; but there is national unity among companies who are outsourcing to their manufacturing and operations back home in the United States. There are many factors causing firms to re-think this trend. They all speak to the technological advancement, energy independence and innovative spirit within the U.S.

If you’re thinking, “What does this have to do with me?” you need to explore outside the box on this one. As major corporations such as Apple, Caterpillar, Wabco, Boeing, Caterpillar and others participate in onshoring, they will be looking for manufacturing facilities, retail space and possibly expanded regional and national headquarters.

Our industry is well positioned to meet the needs of businesses in this pursuit because we offer single-source total building solutions. Companies in the metal building systems arena are wise to follow who is coming onshore and get involved with helping them define building solutions. One way we perform traditional construction is through an integrated design, engineering and manufacturing delivery system.

Why Metal Buildings?

Metal building systems give clients what they want quickly and efficiently. Metal buildings can be erected in one-third the time of conventional construction because they can be built year-round and there is predictability to metal building construction. Site preparation and fabrication can occur at the same time, which isn’t the case with other types of construction framing. The industry saves additional costs by eliminating wasted materials and time, as well as adding essential spacing qualities to a building.

Stores, for instance, can be configured to reflect branding and corporate models. Headquarters with a mix of mezzanines, offices, conference and meeting spaces are easily laid out. And manufacturing facilities that require cranes and open spaces almost doesn’t present a problem because metal buildings have a structural flexibility. The building manufacturer and design-builder can and should remain vigilant throughout the specification, design and building phases to ensure design details meet a building owner’s individual expectations.

Extenders can be enhanced to further reflect a company’s brand and style because metal buildings can be clad in materials such as glass, masonry, stone, EPS and metal wall panels. Roofing options are just as numerous. Metal building manufacturers typically offer architectural and structural metal roofing and wall panel systems to complete their building solution. In addition, solar panels are relatively easy to install during construction or any time after the building is complete and in use.

The strength of steel cannot be over-told; steel adds stability, fire resistance and durability to a building. The Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA), Cleveland, has led product research and testing to aid its members and the industry in discovering the strength of steel. Manufacturers can design their buildings to exceed the minimum performance standards set by the ICC Building Code, ASHRAE 90.1, and the International Energy Conservation Code. The owners can decide what level of performance they need and the manufacturer can design to it.

MBMA has coordinated recent fire tests that benefit owners by increasing their design options. For example, new fire wall designs allow owners to increase insulation levels to address future energy code requirements that will require greater insulation. The tests also led to U.S. wings that now address fiberglass and rigid board options. Material selections today can actually prepare owners to meet the energy codes of tomorrow. In addition, these new fire-rated designs allow guards to be spaced as far apart as 1/2 foot; multiple buildings can be spaced closer together; and separation walls for fire and code requirements can have more flexibility.

Why Not?

While preparing this article, our country was enshrouded in excitement and pride for Team USA during the 2014 Winter Olympics. The U.S. may not be getting another silver or gold for bringing jobs, manufacturing and profits back to this country, but the onshoring potential growth tied to this shifting trend could be aided by building metal building systems because they are professionally custom-engineered steel structures that provide cost-effective and efficient building solutions in low-rise, nonresidential construction. The onshoring trend may just lead us to a different kind of Team USA pride.

Brad Robeson is chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association. More information about the association is available at www.mbma.com. Lots of construction companies want to grow their companies, but can’t. They usually get stuck at a certain size and stop growing for many reasons. Trying to work harder and smarter doesn’t solve the problem and they eventually reach their maximum level of what they can do without hiring more people. Why? Business owners try to do too much themselves, won’t let go, want to delegate but don’t, and can’t decide how or who to hire.

Another common problem occurs when owners micro-manage and control every decision throughout their business operation. They don’t let their people make decisions without checking with them first. Companies can’t grow when the owner has their finger on every single little decision. When these control-freak business owners fire people and then don’t let them do their jobs, they become accountable, or take on responsibilities, the company can’t and won’t grow.

Don’t hire cheap and hope it works out!

Frankly and going onshore, smart business owners finally make the big decision to hire an experienced manager with a strong resume, so they can delegate a small part of their kingdom. Unfortunately, their first instinct is to move someone from within the company into this key position who has little or no experience or skills in the area they need the expertise. The owners are looking for a short time without any luck; they tend to want to hire a low-paid assistant, battalion field supervisor, junior project manager or an estimator with little experience in the type of work they need. Or even worse, rather than taking the time required to find the right person for the job, they attempt to hire a relative, family friend, or in-law who is out of work and seems likely they might be able to do the job. These poor decisions won’t help companies move to the next level. The real reason for making a poor hiring decision is to save money or avoid the time and energy required to hire and pay for the perfect key employee or experienced manager. So rather than do what is right, they hope this easy, more comfortable, weaker and less expensive choice will work out. You know what happens when you hire untrained cheap people with little or no senior management experience to assist you? You spend all your time trying to keep them busy, answering their questions, helping them do simple tasks and training them. In other words, you do your job plus theirs, which causes you to work more and achieve less!

Design your BIZ-Function Chart

Most company organizational charts show who reports to whom. They don’t show who is 100 percent accountable or responsible for getting work done. They also don’t lay out all the tasks and functions required to make your company achieve its strategic goals and objectives. The best way to organize your company is to draft your BIZ-Function Chart. To do this, take out a large piece of flip chart paper and lay out all the tasks and jobs that have to be accomplished in your company, from finding work, to doing work, to keeping track, to administration and managing your company. Lay out your BIZ-Function Chart with these function headings across the top of the page:

• Find Work-Business Development
• Do Work-Operations
• Keep Track of Work-Financials
• Company Administration
• Company Management

Now use one sticky note for each function or work activity required. Determine and list out every responsibility you want to delegate 100 percent. Next, create an accountability and responsibility chart listing out all of the functions in your company. Assign the appropriate person to be 100 percent accountable and responsible for each task and business function. Delegate or die!

You can’t grow unless you do. The more you do for your people, the less they do for you. After looking at how your company really works and how many things you are actually managing, micro-managing, or responsible for, decide what you want to delegate. Determine which areas you should do based on what you do best and will get the highest return on your time for your company’s bottom line.

Almost always, the company owner should stay involved with the finding work functions. By deciding what you want to do, don’t want to do, and should do, you can then create a new job description and management position for someone to take over those tasks, decisions, accountabilities and responsibilities you want to delegate 100 percent.

Only this action will allow your company to grow.

George Hedley is a licensed professional business coach, popular professional speaker and author of “Get Your Business to Work!” available at his online bookstore. He works with contractors to build profitable, growing companies. To request your free copy of “Prof 101 For Contractors,” sign up for his free monthly newsletter, Hedley to speak, be part of his ongoing BIZDOACH program; or take a class at Hardhat BIZSCHOOL online university, visit www.hardhatpresentations.com or email gh@hardhatpresentations.com