

plans and attached prints must not be so large that they need to be folded more than once to reduce them to slightly less than "legal size".

- (g) Attached prints of plan should be folded once and completely microfilmed with the instruments. The original should not be folded unless absolutely necessary, but should be rolled, laid flat, or preferably suspended. If folded they should be folded only once and placed in large envelopes.

Richard E. Priddle
Assistant Inspector of Legal Offices

-05-

VARIOUS ASPECTS OF A SURVEYING CAREER

by J. W. Gavin

A surveyor was asked, "What is the most important aspect in a surveying business?" "Collecting the money" was the reply. In buying into an already-established survey business, money is a most important consideration. The ideal situation, I would think, would be to have the agreed-upon purchase price plus sufficient money to live on for one year. If this were possible, I would say that a person could probably carry on the business in the black with hardly any credit needed from the bank. From our own experience, it would appear that a business would need about \$6000 to \$7000 cash assets to operate in the black. Without this reserve, I would say that it would take a minimum of five or six years to get into the black.

Some of our younger employee-surveyors look at the tariff of \$60.00 per day and think that all they have to do to earn \$12000 for 200 days work is to hang up their shingle and watch the money roll in. A rather interesting figure taken from our operations shows that the profits on gross receipts varies from 17% to 40% per year but averages out to about 25%.

In my opinion, there are many advantages in buying into an already-established business as against setting-up a new business. In an already-established business with a good reputation, the clients are there and only have to be held. The necessary plans are available plus field notes of previous surveys. The office space, accounting, filing have been set up together with trained personnel for both office and field work. The nucleus of survey equipment, camp equipment are all available. Liaison has already been set up with all the various government departments such as Lands and Forests, Examiner of Surveys, land Titles, Registry Offices, Department of Highways, Hydro, Public Works, etc.

The value of a Land Surveying practice is a rather intangible thing. Without someone qualified to run the business and make use of the facilities, it does not have too much value. Before purchasing a practice, it would be well to look with a great deal of care at the equipment and its condition, the plans, type of notes, system used for recording and the method of indexing and filing the field notes and plans. Another thing to be considered is the method used by yourself and if different, which is the best method? If you consider your method best, can the other system be adapted or conversely, can you adapt yourself. I know personally that it can be extremely frustrating

trying to make notes in field books or on field note paper that you have not used before and that you think is inferior to some other system that you know.

For a young surveyor (especially one whose previous work has been with one of the government departments) buying into a business already established would be by far the preferable method to get into private practice. This would be especially so if the original surveyor stayed in the firm for a period of time. There is no doubt that the experience of an older surveyor who has practised privately is invaluable. As we all know, the red tape in a surveying practice becomes more involved every year. The Examiner of Surveys wants things done and shown in one way, the Department of Lands and Forests slightly different, the Department of Mines again vary slightly and so it goes with the various Departments and clients. Some clients want accounts in triplicate, some in duplicate, some showing a complete breakdown of time and expenses, others only partial breakdown and others just the total. Again, some clients want field notes, others want certain information shown with plans drawn at a certain scale and certain size. The older practising surveyor is cognizant of these requirements of the various clients and if he doesn't remember, he knows where to find them. All of these things may be minor taken individually but if taken together make for a satisfied client and more important still may lead to the probable prompt payment of accounts which, as pointed out previously, is a most important item in any survey practice. A satisfied client is going to return with any other surveying that he wants done. The experienced surveyor in private practice has a good idea of the cost involved in making various surveys. He can give reasonably close estimates to clients. A final account close to the estimated price or preferably a little lower helps make a better relationship with the client. The old clients will return if there is a continuity in the firm.

Before entering into any partnership, it would be well to consider carefully some of the following points:

1. The personality and character of the proposed partner.
2. The reputation, amount of business, clients, employees; office, survey and camping equipment, etc.
3. Plans and field notes, filing system for both plans and field notes.
4. A firm contract should be agreed upon to define method of financing, division of profits, division of authority and work to be performed.

I would recommend to the prospective partners that before committing themselves, a trial period of a year or two would be advisable. This would be especially true for a young surveyor who had taken his articles and training with one of the Government departments or a large firm such as The Bell Telephone Company or a Mining company.

The ambition of most young surveyors seems to be to get into private practice as a principal in a firm. We want to be in the position of being our own boss. We want to be able to stay in the city rather than be away from home. We want to charge \$60.00 a day plus expenses and get rich. Somehow, the fact that we must go where the work is escapes us--that the office rent, salaries, phone, electricity, personal expenses, etc, must be paid whether we work or not; that there are times when there is no work--how

long can we afford to pay our key men? Will we be able to get good axemen or assistants when we need them if we let them go? We must not overlook that while we are on holidays we are not making any money--that no one is going to pay us if we are sick unless we have some sickness insurance which is an added personal expense; that no one is providing for our pension; that if we make some stupid mistake in addition, it might cost us a considerable sum to buy a piece of land to correct our mistake; that if one of our assistants makes an error reading the chain, the same thing can happen; that several accounts owing to us have not been paid--some of which will never be paid.

Personally, I feel that the advantages and disadvantages of private practice compared with working for a large company or the government just about balance out in the long run. One's individual personality and desire would govern the satisfaction he derives from his work. The security of pension, vacation with pay and sick leave with a large company or government department are balanced by the supposedly greater freedom and remuneration in private practice. I think that most young surveyors, whether working for the government, a large company or in private practice in this area, must face the fact that they will be away from home a good part of the time for quite a number of years.

-015-

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PRECIS OF REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON NOTES AND RECORDS INDEX 1964-5

Objects Of Committee - To devise a workable procedure to index survey records for South Central Group.

Results Obtained - A workable system was designed and proved successful under trial run with three survey bodies over two months. A standard monthly return sheet was designed, experimented with, and produced. Print-out books were designed with regard to cost and maximum convenience of use.

Procedure - Participants fill in monthly return and mail to committee. Committee checks through return to ensure they are correctly filled out and sends to computing firm. Computing firm sorts and inserts electronically in index and forwards to committee who distributes to participants.

Financing - Costs will be covered by an initial \$10.00 per O. L. S. per firm or department in the area to be paid by the firm or department at commencement of system, and thereafter \$2.00 per month per O. L. S. on the same basis starting the beginning of the fourth month of operation.

Proposed Implementation - An explanatory brochure, monthly return blanks and invoice to be mailed out to participants on the first of March or as soon after as is feasible and returns for March to be mailed to committee at end of the month.

Note - O. L. S. firms or departments from outside the area who do work inside the area are requested to submit returns so that their surveys in the area can be included in the index.

Committee Members - W. N. Wildman (Chairman), C. D. Hadfield or John Beatson, M. C. Phillips, D. Barcham and K. Hulme.

Please telephone or write any committee member regarding relevant questions.