

- **Job Problem News –**

- **Mold** - Where does it start and stop? Referred to as biological contamination mold is certainly the buzz word associated with liability and driving a lot of claims and litigation. Mold as all fungi is ubiquitous (widespread) meaning it is not new and has been around since the beginning of time (more or less), but it is now causing a major threat to the construction industry on a whole and will certainly cause insurance companies to make other adjustments to their future policies. Yes, some molds can cause problems for some people. Is it taken out of proportion? One thing is clear that it is a by product of moisture problems. “Fungi will not proliferate indoors unless their moisture requirement is met” says Connie Jenkins of ET&T www.EnvTesTec.com. Bottom line is the ceramic tile and stone industry needs to make sure our installations are done correctly to avoid moisture problems and the potential excessive liability that goes with it.

- **Quality Control –**

- **Specifications** - As in all failures the odds are it will have something to do with human error. When it comes to installing something the culprit is likely the installer regardless of the industry. Yet the value engineer process compounds the problem because it generates inadequate products that contribute to the failures. Ceramic Tile and Stone installations are no exception to this problem. The solution is to properly enforce the use of the quality assurance and control sections that CSI has designed in their Master Specifications. Doesn't matter whose fault it is everyone pays one way or the other. What is your risk and liability? What is your time worth? It pays to make sure there are adequate quality control instructions written into the project specifications. The problem is that most ceramic tile and stone specifications fail to adequately address these important sections.

- **Training -**

- **CTDA Presents Tile Training in a Box™ - A** guide for training new employees new to the tile industry. It covers The Basics of the Tile Industry, Tile Types and Functions, Ceramic Tile Trims and Usage, Ceramic Tile Installation, Ceramic Tile Care and Maintenance, Presenting and Selling Ceramic Tile, Stone Types and Usage, and provides reference materials and videos. A great tool to help make your new employees more effective sooner, and to allow your experienced employees to be more effective without the interruptions from new employees. For more information visit www.ctdahome.org.

- **Marketing –**

- **Target the Almost Rich –** Marketers have targeted the middle class and the very rich, but there is another target that has been overlooked who aren't truly wealthy but still manage to rank in the top 20% of earners and account for nearly 40% of total spending

in the United States. Their average household income is around \$100,000 but as a percent of income they have a much higher percentage of discretionary income they aren't spending. The key is to identify their demographics and psychographic to learn how to reach them and give them what they want. *Read Harvard Business Review June 2002 for details.*

- **Business Planning –**

- Someone once said "A sailor who doesn't know where he is going will have a difficult time discerning an ill wind from a good wind." We all know we should have business plans to help us make the best decisions to support our mission and objectives for our business. Synergy is the result of good communications and coordination among team members, which is a distinguishing characteristic of successful businesses. Business plans are the maps to producing synergy.

- **Stone Knowledge** –
 - MIA Design Manual “How it Can Work For You.” – Vincent Migliore of MIA gives the 10 commandments to Successful Stone Floor Installations. *Published in Stone World Magazine April 2002.*
 - **Something to Think About....** –
 - “Information sharing is critical because intellectual assets, unlike physical assets, increase in value with use. Properly stimulated, knowledge and intellect grow exponentially when shared.” *James Brian Quinn et al. “Managing Professional Intellect: Making the Most of the Best”*
 - **Ceramic Tile And Stone Consultants (www.CTaSC.com)**
 - is a National Service Company providing Job Problem Investigations and Expert Witness Services, Quality Control Services for Product and Installation Methods, Training programs, Market Research and Outsourcing Services, and Business Planning Consulting to the Ceramic Tile and Stone Industry.
- Harvard Business Review March-April 1996.*