

ERA HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

Energy Resource Associates was founded in 1981 with the purpose of bringing a new point of view to the field of facilities management and engineering.

ERA's first major undertaking was to develop and put in place an energy services business unit for a Fortune 500 temperature control manufacturer. The purpose of this program was to place **ERA's** client in a prominent position in the then-emerging energy services industry (now also known by the names "performance contracting" and "demand side management"). At that time the delivery systems for energy services, (the provision of heating, cooling, ventilation and light to the work environment at "least cost") lacked a comprehensive, integrated approach. **ERA** developed a program that combined high quality financial, engineering, construction, maintenance and project management/administration services in a mutual success (Owner and Energy Service Company) formula. In less than two years from its introduction, this program achieved over 40 million dollars in sales, positioning **ERA's** client as a premier Energy Services Company, which it remains to this day.

With the maturing of the energy services industry and the maturing of **ERA** as an organization, **ERA** diversified its service offerings by adding, most notably, restoration and modernization projects in existing buildings. This market was a natural for **ERA** given the company's inherent orientation towards and history of working with existing, rather than new buildings. While this market varies enormously with respect to project size, a notable project which **ERA** successfully undertook was the development and implementation, on a fast-track schedule, of a \$1,600,000 air conditioning installation for the San Francisco Chronicle and Examiner. This project is described elsewhere herein but is most notable in that the total elapsed time from start of design to equipment start-up was less than 6 months! More recently, but in the same vein, **ERA** expedited a major (\$3,500,000) infrastructure renewal and expansion project at JFK Memorial Hospital in Palm Springs by pre-purchasing a million dollars worth of equipment (chillers, cooling towers and emergency generators) for the Owner, while they were still negotiating the construction contract.

At **ERA** commitment creates results. As with any professional services company, **ERA** has the choice of reasons or results, i.e., we can give our clients reasons for why we could not perform or, we can produce results. We diligently strive for the latter. Our commitment to results at **ERA** finds itself manifested in a number of attitudes or biases which are prevalent in our work. These include:

- **Willingness to collaborate or join forces with our clients.** When working with our clients we become virtually indistinguishable from client staff in terms of motivation, concern for the task at hand and the results that our client organization is trying to achieve.

Free flow of information, opinions and ideas is essential to creating the atmosphere of trust necessary for such a team effort.

- **Orientation toward action.** **ERA** takes whatever action is necessary to keep its project moving, often involving "hands-on" trial and error experimentation, "straw man" documents or other progress-stimulating action as appropriate. Because **ERA's** key professionals have prior experience working for design-build contractors, **ERA** is uniquely able to act in the field, as opposed to playing the highly theoretical, "stay-in-the-office" role which is unfortunately characteristic of traditional consulting firms.
- **Openness to new ideas.** **ERA** has a propensity for innovation and is not afraid to "plow new ground" or develop new techniques when traditional approaches will no longer produce optimal results. Integrated design and construction, single-loop variable flow chilled water systems (since the early 1980's) and temporary whole-building field trials of innovative HVAC retrofit are some specific examples.
- **Integration.** **ERA** takes a multi-disciplinary/systems approach to solving problems. On many of our projects we provide mechanical, electrical, civil, structural and control systems engineering, all under our roof. In addition, we consider that one of our primary tasks is to coordinate and translate between disciplines. Doing so, we provide comprehensive problem solutions that maximize results for the amount of effort input, and minimize the overlap or wasted effort between disciplines. A truly comprehensive, integrated solution to a problem provides the client with a trouble-free path of action to follow.

While energy management remains a special focus of **ERA's** activities, our unique results-oriented philosophy is applied to all our activities in the field of facilities engineering and management. Indeed, at **ERA**, "*We make buildings work.*"

As a final sort of manifestation of this philosophy and to further reinforce the broad nature of our engineering service offerings, entering our third decade of business, we have even chosen to call ourselves by a new name, Engineering Resource Associates. Since we see energy and engineering as inextricably intertwined, this transition in identity will be done in an evolutionary rather than instantaneous style.