



IT'S ALL IN THE SPECS

Written specifications within your project is somewhat like the function of the concrete foundation in your home.....probably the most boring part of the project, certainly not the most enjoyable to look at, **BUT** the most important. Without it, the whole house falls down. Specifications are the foundation on which your project stands. If they are not properly planned and executed, the project just won't hold up properly. You end up with a weak substitute for what you thought you were getting. You may not know it right away, but a few years down the line, every error made in properly detailing your wants and needs in the specifications will be clearly evident to you and your organization.

There is no magic set of rules that apply to all buildings. Training buildings are in a class by themselves. Within the construction industry, they are not considered a building, but rather a training aid, a prop. As such, they do not have to meet many code requirements that buildings designed for occupancy are required to meet. In other words, this is one place where you **CANNOT** count on the standard set of rules that govern many other purchases (say, a fire station or a fire truck). Those "standard" rules that would protect you from ending up with a non-functional station or piece of apparatus do not protect you here because your training building is in a class by itself.

If you simply ask for a training building without specs, you could receive anything from a broken down wood shed (yes, there are wood fire training buildings!) to a top of the line product. If you ask for a metal training building without both writing and enforcing clear specs, you could end up with a piece of junk. And...once you have it, you're stuck with it...unless it's clear in the specs.

This is somewhat less a problem if you have an architect or engineer on your team who is involved with building processes on an ongoing basis, someone who knows the jargon and is used to reviewing specifications. Keep in mind however, they may have expertise in construction, but most likely have never trained anyone to fight a fire.

That being said, recognize that it is incumbent upon you to understand exactly what is going on with this process and which specifications are unique to the way you will be utilizing the building.

RETHINK HOW YOU TRAIN



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How do you do this?

- By reading closely and thoughtfully that admittedly dry document labeled “Specifications”
- By asking questions
- By being very sure that the specification your organization puts forth is the best of the best
- By requiring documentation from contractors/suppliers proving that they can meet your specifications - and that they have done so on past projects.
- By not being satisfied with just assuming that because it looks official, it will result in a quality building.

When looking at Burn Room Liners look for quality:

- Is it UL listed?
 - Although all boards may look the same... not all boards are created the same. Thermal lining systems are expensive. Don't pay high end prices for low end products. There is only **ONE** way to know that you are truly getting what you paid for.
- What type of hardness/density does the lining system have?
 - The purpose of the thermal lining system is to protect the building. Once the thermal lining system has been breached, you risk damage to the structural integrity of your building which is costly to repair. The higher compressive strength the greater ability to withstand incidental impact from air packs, axes and other equipment.
- What is the maximum operating temperature?
 - Remember that the purpose of a thermal lining system is to protect the building structure. Be realistic in how hot you are going to burn with your fuel loads.

If you want quality, if you want a building and lining system that will last, you better take the time to read and understand exactly what you're getting. Ten years down the road, you'll be glad you did – and so will everyone in your organization.

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