

"WHY SHOP DRAWINGS?"

1. Probably one of the most controversial phases of the relationship between the mill and the architect/designer is the shop drawing. This is because there exists an area of misunderstanding on the part of both parties concerned. Actually, there is a very real value and an essential function in a shop drawing that must be recognized.

2. **LET US DEFINE "SHOP DRAWING."**

Primarily it is the basic part of cabinet and millwork fabrication instructions. Then, it is an interpretation of the ideas expressed by the architect/designer. Equally important, the millwork shop drawing is essential to and depended on by other sub-contractors. It is the common language between the manufacturer and the architect/designer and the general contractor. It provides a medium where the mill may suggest modifications to the architect's/designer's drawings. It is the extension of the architect's/designer's design into the area of engineering. It is the declaration of intent of manufacturing method on the part of the mill, and an indication of the mill's experience and ability. Functioning as final directions to the plant personnel, it provides the manufacturer with an opportunity to set forth an exact description of materials and assembly. It is an essential part of the documents controlling the job. It is neither unimportant nor trivial.

3. **WHAT CONSIDERATION DOES THIS VALUABLE DOCUMENT DESERVE?**

First, it must never be the product of inexperience. In reality the author of a shop drawing is an engineer who is responsible to a great extent for the selection of material by grade and species. In addition, he is charged with joinery and assembly direction. He must be qualified to begin with a small scale design and develop that idea into a full size scientifically engineered plan that will accurately express the intent of the architect/designer. For effective economy, he must not unnecessarily "clutter" the drawing, and for accurate execution of the job he can omit no essentials.

4. **THE ARCHITECT/DESIGNER IN REVIEWING SHOP DRAWINGS SHOULD CONSIDER:**

4.1. Deviations from the original plans are recommendations for improvement, and not necessarily a "flying in the face" of instructions. It is as wrong for a checker to arbitrarily stamp "Redraw and Resubmit" on a shop drawing that proposes a change as it is wrong to automatically accept a folio of drawings because there are many pages of full size duplicates of the original plans. However, whenever a suggested change by the millwork supplier is proposed, it should be brought to the attention of the architect/designer on a separate transmittal.

4.2. Those charged with the checking of shop drawings should be highly skilled personnel completely familiar with millwork fabrication, and responsible for insuring compliance with established standards.

5. **IN CONCLUSION, A SERIOUS RECOMMENDATION:**

Only two copies of shop drawings are necessary for checking. After the check, the architect/designer should retain one copy, and a marked set should be returned to the mill with a request for the required number of final prints.