

REPRESENTATION OF PAST EXPERIENCE POLICY

Pertinent Sections of the Regulations

11-12 Code of Professional Ethics

B.2 Full Disclosure

An architect or firm shall be accurate in representing to a prospective or existing client or employer the qualifications and the scope of responsibility in connection with work for which credit is claimed.

D.3 Full Disclosure

An architect or firm shall not engage in conduct involving fraud or wanton disregard of the rights of others.

D.4 Full Disclosure

An architect or firm shall not act in any manner so as to mislead a client or the general public or so as to misrepresent its competence or qualifications.

Commentary

An architect who has been an employee of an architectural practice may not claim credit for projects contracted for in the name of the previous employer; to do so is a misrepresentation of facts.

An architect should state next to the identification of a project that he or she gained individual experience in connection with the project, but the experience was acquired as an employee of another firm and identify that firm. The architect should also describe the nature and extent of participation in the project. For example, “While employed as the senior project architect with Design Firm, Mr. Taylor managed the preparation of all design and construction documents for the project.”

An architect who formerly was a principal in a firm may legitimately make additional claims, provided he or she identifies and explains these claims. The individual should state that his or her responsibilities included securing the commission, design, project management, or similar relevant activities.

In similar fashion, the original firm where a principal or architect leaves has the same obligation to accurately present the current staff’s experience and capabilities. These should include activities related to securing the commission, design, project management, or similar relevant experiences.

Finally, projects that remain unconstructed, listed as credits, should be identified as “unbuilt” or a similar designation.

The South Carolina State Board of Architectural Examiners strongly recommends all architects to address credit issues in employer/employee contracts or partnership agreements. This will enable architects to determine in advance how such credit will be treated in the event of a future separation. The Board will honor these determinations provided they are not misleading to clients or the public.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How should I give credit to my previous employer/firm for work I performed while there? I have seen other architects credits in very small fonts, “buried” on a website or printed in a manner that most clients and the public would not even find.

A. Credits should be clearly and accurately stated and in a reasonably visible place. If the individual who left the firm performed minor work as part of a project team, he/she should state the extent of his/her role accurately. If a firm splits, and one partner leaves, he/she may claim appropriate credit for any work on the project and state that it was the firm’s project while he/she was a partner.

2. I recently left a firm that declined to allow me to use their project photos. It was not an amicable parting. I took my own photographs of the exterior of several buildings and, with the occupant’s permission, also took interior photos. May I use those photos and include that work in my resume?

A. Yes, so provided you claim credit only for work actually performed, and state you were employed at the firm at the time the project was completed.

3. While interviewing for a project, I was made aware that my previous firm used images and project data that I intended to showcase during my team’s presentation. Can I claim credit for the design work?

A. Yes, but you must clearly state that the work was performed while employed with the previous firm.