

Good communication drives success at Atwill-Morin

Growing up in the construction industry, Matthew Atwill-Morin, now president of Montréal-based construction giant **Atwill-Morin**, remembers realizing how a construction site was really just like a big sports team. “Everybody has a role,” he says. “It’s like hockey — defence, goalies, forwards. I fell in love with it.”

Maybe that’s why, when Morin was part of the third generation to take over the family business along with his brothers, communication was key to its ongoing success. “We had a vision of growth and also of inclusiveness

in all aspects, including decision-making,” he says. “We don’t rule with an iron fist, we consult and listen.”

The brothers brought in a team of consultants over a decade ago to help grow the business, which triggered the cultural changes that have carried on to this day, Morin says. “It’s a huge part of our success. We had the openness to listen to people that knew more than us.”

Indeed, over the last 20 years, the company has expanded to offer concrete, scaffolding and civil work across Canada and grown from 30 employees to just over 1,000.

Listening to — and being invested in — staff drives every decision at Atwill-Morin, Morin says, resulting in several key initiatives encompassing training, health and safety and the environment.

“We surveyed employees and those were the three most important things,” explains Mélyssa Provost, brands and communications director. “The construction industry has a lot of work to do environmentally,” says Provost, who is also a member of the ecological transition committee.

Atwill-Morin calculates its environmental impact in and is co-owner of Brick Recyc Ontario, a Canadian innovation that allows

the reuse of bricks on construction sites. “Looking at our carbon footprint is going to be a huge step in the right direction,” Provost says. “I’m very excited.”

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In 2024, Atwill-Morin announced the addition of a dozen exoskeletons — technology that reduces the load on the body and increases strength — to prevent worker injuries.

“Everybody needs to be safe and to go home at the end of the day, but it’s also a long-term vision,” Morin explains. “If you’re chipping concrete or bricks for 2,000 hours in a year, we want to make sure you can have a long and healthy career.”

One initiative Morin is particularly proud of began in 2008 as a response to reduced workload in the winter months: several apprentices are selected for paid training with seasoned labourers during the off-season. The employees are trained with up to 500 hours of on-site work training during a time when they may have been out of work otherwise.

Taking care of others extends to the greater community for the construction company, which

8,000+
hours staff development and training in 2024

60%
fewer days lost to accidents vs. industry average

8
annual social activities for employees and families

800
volunteer hours and \$200,000+ for charity last year

gives back to a wide range of causes — often in creative ways.

For example, when raising money for the Sainte-Justine pediatric hospital in Montréal, Atwill-Morin rope-access technicians dressed as superheroes to abseil the building and bring smiles to children’s faces.

“There is a lot of community involvement,” says Provost. “The owners are very generous, and when a cause is important to a staff member it becomes just as important to them.”

Supporting one another is a natural part of being a family business and extends to the whole operation, Morin explains.

“The best part of a family business is that we all have the same purpose,” he says. “Nobody’s pulling or pushing — we just want success for our family, because many other families depend on it.” ■



▲ Employees at **Atwill-Morin** participate in a hockey tournament fundraiser for the Sainte-Justine pediatric hospital.



▲ Workers at **Atwill-Morin** use exoskeletons to reduce the load on their bodies and prevent injuries.



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