

## TOP PLAYER

# Success rooted in strong beliefs

Hot Firm status a boost to Mabbett & Associates' image.

Arthur Mabbett was once told, during his military career, that he should start a business because he would be successful.

He did his former military superiors good on both accounts.

**Mabbett & Associates, Inc.** (Bedford, MA), a 42-person firm that provides integrated multidisciplinary environmental, health and safety and sustainability-energy consulting and engineering services, is No. 22 on **THE ZWEIG LETTER** 2012 Hot Firm List.

With a 30-year history, Mabbett has delivered value-added professional services to industry, commercial enterprise and federal, state and local agencies. Mabbett is a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Center for Veterans Enterprise, verified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business. Mabbett has regional offices in Providence, R.I.; Alexandria, Va., and Paramus, N.J.

Arthur Mabbett says that success in business isn't based on major trends but rather remaining committed to your clients and staff and adapting to market conditions and circumstances.

Read his Q&A below for more insight.

**THE ZWEIG LETTER: How does it feel to be a Hot Firm?**

**Arthur Mabbett:** Very good would be an understatement. We are pleased to be recognized by our peers for the efforts and realized success of our management and staff, based on their hard work and commitment.

**TZL: How valuable will the Hot Firm status to your brand?**

**AM:** It's very valuable. The recognition has enhanced the firm's image in our industry and has been positively noted by our clients and future business prospects. We've become a recognized and acknowledged leader as a Hot Firm.



Arthur Mabbett, President, Mabbett & Associates, Inc.

"One must remain focused on quality work product, commitment, persistence, value added competitive services and the development and maintenance of lasting long-term relationships."

**TZL: List three ingredients that allowed you to thrive when others have failed in difficult times? In other words, what makes a Hot Firm in 2012?**

**AM:**

- 1) Creating and taking advantage of new market opportunities.
- 2) Developing and implementing sound strategic business, and marketing and business development plans.
- 3) Hard work, persistence, flexibility and commitment.

**TZL: In 10 years, do you think you will still be a Hot Firm? What are the major threats to business success today?**

**AM:** I'm not sure we'll be a Hot Firm, primarily because the market opportunities or circumstance might not be available to support double- or triple-digit growth. We will always fo-

cus on sustainable growth and may be a Hot Firm at different periods of our growth, but I don't think a firm can be continuously "Hot." As a firm matures, various factors come into play and although they may continue to be a leader in our industry, they may not meet the requirements to be designated a Hot Firm.

The major threats to business success today primarily relate to a more challenging and less friendly business environment from federal, state and local regulators/governments; increasing overhead of various benefit programs out of one's control; limited access to capital; and a lack of appreciation by young college graduates of what it really takes to succeed in business.

**TZL: What are the major trends you must embrace to stay competitive?**

**AM:** One must remain focused on quality work product, commitment, persistence, value added competitive services and the development and maintenance of lasting long-term relationships. Success in business isn't based on major trends but rather remaining committed to your clients and staff and adapting to market conditions and circumstances.

**TZL: On a personal note, do you remember your first paid job? What did you learn then that still influences the way you work today?**

**AM:** Hard work and persistence pays off in the long run.

**TZL: Do you hold someone (inside or outside the industry) as a special mentor? How did this person influence who you are?**

**AM:** I was fortunate to have a number of special mentors in my life but the most special mentor was my father. Arthur E. Mabbett, Jr. was an exceptional and inspiring registered professional electrical engineer who not only served his country as a member of the greatest generation fighting in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations during WWII for over four years but was also a

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leader in his field once the war ended. He taught me the value of doing a job right the first time, respect of others and helped me to understand the importance of effective writing and communications. He supported me as a boy scout serving on our Troop Advancement Committee and attending many of our events and camping trips as I worked to attain the Eagle rank. He truly helped me to become the man I am today. Most importantly, he gave me a note when I was 14 years old that I found out in my later years was written by President Calvin Coolidge that concludes with, "Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent." I'd recommend this statement be given to all young scientists and engineers, as it will help them to truly realize a key to success in life.

**TZL: What's the one trait you most admire in people and why?**

**AM:** I admire individuals who demonstrate leadership and commitment. Leaders are generally inspirational and based on their commitment to the mission and their staff, help to bring out the best in others. Based on my own military background (I served six years active duty as a U.S. army officer and another 13 years in the reserves), I had a unique opportunity to work with more senior general and other ranking staff officers who provided me with much more responsibility and authority than I would have ever been given as a young civilian graduate. They helped to bring out the best in me and actually recommended I leave the service and open my own business; they believed I had the ability to succeed.

They were right.

**TZL: Describe the most challenging thing you have ever done/the biggest challenge you have taken on outside of work.**

**AM:** The biggest challenge I've ever faced was to assist my wife in raising three children; all of whom have made us very proud. I give her 90 percent of the credit. Being a successful parent isn't something one learns at university. Yet, I believe based upon the way my parents raised me and my two sisters and their example (the same for my wife) that my wife and I were successful. Our three children are all now successful professionals, have nine university degrees between them, enjoy what they do and pay their own bills. By the way, they have also given us four beautiful grandchildren as of this date! We are eternally grateful.

**TZL: What lesson learned would you pass along to a recent college graduate embarking on a career in the A/E/P and environmental consulting fields?**

**AM:** Work hard, focus on quality work product, be persistent, build long-lasting relationships and don't expect anything to be handed to you on a silver platter. PS: Dress for success and use electronic devices as tools. They are not the answer.

**TZL: What question would you ask of another Hot Firm leader?**

**AM:** What steps have you taken to address the very different expectations of young professionals under 35? ▲▲