To Foreman In 3 Months

I first arrived to work on March 26. In about as much time as it takes to remove a tie and put on a pair of gloves they had me planting and selling nursery stock. I began digging trees and shrubs to place in show beds for immediate delivery to customers. Paul Leimeister showed me how to properly dig a tree or shrub. It was work, but after many days of digging I learned how to do the job well. I even learned some of the short cuts to this phase of the business.

As the weather became warmer and more predictable, we began the initial spring lawn cleanup program. This involved power raking, mowing, fertilizing and general cleanup of lawns and border shrubbery. This job became boring to me as time went on, but the end result was always a beautiful lawn.

When lawn cleanup jobs were completed in May, all of us began planting trees and shrubs. Larry would explain to me different shrubs to use in various landscape situations. He demonstrated the correct way to plant an ornamental. As expected, I didn’t always plant them correctly at first. That’s when the most learning was gained; the job would have to be done over until it was right.

The details of my various assignments under Larry Holkenborg would fill a book. Larry is a perfectionist; any job I did had to be done right or I quickly found myself doing it over and over again.

Before I was promoted to temporary foreman, my assignment was to design and implement a landscape plan.

That’s when the “fun” began.

My responsibilities were: all work be completed as prepared by the landscape design, proper planting depth and watering of shrubs as previously learned; being sure that the area was cleaned up after work; leaving watering instructions with landowner for newly planted stock; preventive maintenance on equipment; and making out the daily work order for the jobs completed each day. This also involved getting the customer to sign off the job on these work orders and writing a report.

I found that one of the greatest challenges I’ve experienced in my 19 short years is being a foreman over men twice my age. It made me put myself in their place when I would assign various jobs to be done. I had to ask myself if I would do this job or that job. I quickly realized that being a foreman is no picnic!

All the while, Larry’s right-hand men, Paul and John Leimeister, kept

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