

Professional Development: Managing the Information Flow or FAT is Good!

The information flow has exploded, with radio, TV, telephone, newspapers, magazines, faxes, snail mail, and email all bringing input at a rate that can be overwhelming. Take steps now to gain control of the job-related information stream. You'll improve your management skills and reduce your stress level.

First, consider the information coming to you and ask a few basic questions. Does this pertain to my position? Is it urgent? If not urgent, is it new? Is it necessary to the proper functioning of my department or my facility? Does it relate to my strategic plan? If the answer to all of these questions is no, what is the objective in further processing and keeping the information?

Take a few tips shared by Barbara Hemphill, President of Hemphill Productivity Institute, Inc., in the January 2000 issue of Association Management magazine. She recommends the "FAT" system: File, Act, or Toss. "When information piles up," she says, "it means there's a decision that hasn't been made. As a user of information, you must file it (which simply means you are

afraid to throw it away because you may need it someday), act on it (decide whether the information relates to something you need to do - a project or event you might be planning), or toss it (because it doesn't relate to any of your goals)."

Hemphill further notes that the FAT system applies equally to electronic information and suggests you take control of when you empty the trash. She recommends setting your computer's default system to "throw it away," thus saving you from the temptation to use your email inbox as "a repository for postponed decisions."

Remember, in your work mode, it's okay to dispose of unneeded information, even good information, that is not applicable to job skills or performance.



Mentoring Program Introduced

The Mentoring Program may well become the most important initiative of the Membership Committee. It will be key to STMA at the national/international level in both growth and long-term involvement, and to the regional Chapters in getting more people actively involved. It's one more element of the synergistic relationship between these two major components of the Association.

The Mentoring Program will serve several purposes: provide a personal, member to member welcome to new members; inform them of the benefits of the national association and of the local/regional chapter as a vital first step in networking; become a resource for answering questions, providing information and helping establish other networking "links;" and getting more people actively involved in STMA at the national and chapter levels.

As a new member joins STMA, he/she will be assigned to a volunteer mentor. The mentor will personally welcome the new member and help to acclimate them into the benefits and privileges of membership. The intent is to help the new member become comfortable with the Association and to encourage them to become involved and active immediately. Each member is a vital part of STMA and of the Sports Turf industry and the Mentoring Program will help get that message across - one to one. This will prove beneficial to the new member, the mentor, STMA, chapters, and the profession. For further details on this program, contact STMA Headquarters or visit the STMA Website: www.sportsturfmanager.com.



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