

Managing to get ahead

We took a new name a few months ago, believing that the bulk of our readers are, indeed, "managers." Managers of their time, managers of budgets, project managers and people managers. When a good manager speaks, people listen.

Ron Kujawa is such a person. He not only operates a thriving business in the Milwaukee area, but he's also a very active member of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America and a member of *Lawn Care Industry's* technical advisory board.

Kujawa spoke at the most recent Landscape Expo, and people listened.

"A certain amount of caring and consideration is necessary to be a good manager and recognize employees' problems," he noted. "Employees have personal goals. We want them all to achieve those goals, using the company as an avenue. And, in most of the cases, their goals are the same as yours: coping with challenges, economic security and so on."

Kujawa, who operates KEI Enterprises with wife Sally, has three simple rules for its managers:

- (1) "You must be honest and represent the company with integrity.
- (2) "You must never promise what you cannot deliver," and, Kujawa says with a laugh,
- (3) "Ronnie and Sally do not like surprises."

Employees have told the Kujawas what their immediate needs are. Everytime they ask, they hear the same refrain: communication, recognition and training.

These are not big secrets here. Every good manager knows that he or she must communicate with employees. Employees don't like surprises, either. Every good manager knows that he or she must recognize exceptional efforts by employees. It helps them recreate that effort when needed again if they know it will be appreciated. And every employee would like to be taught the best, safest way to finish an assigned task.

Most of all, as Kujawa never ceases to point out, managing is a 24-hour-a-day job. Are you up to the task?



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