

## Great managers focus on clients, support workers

■ Not everyone can be an effective manager in a service delivery organization.

It takes someone who can deal with and gauge customer perception, says Ron Zemke, of Performance Research Associates, Inc.

"It takes someone who can be comfortable with a lot of chaos in his or her world," says Zemke. Also, someone with incredible stamina.

In fact, the best managers of service delivery organizations often don't see themselves as managers at all—not exclusively, anyway. Sometimes they view themselves as motivators, evaluators, or cheerleaders, says the noted business consultant and author.

They know that, to build a successful organization, they themselves must be service providers. They also know that *their* customers are the organization's front-line employees—the people who have daily contact with clients.

"The goal is to have internally satisfied customers (employees) so that you will have external customers who are satisfied," says Zemke, who directed ALCA's Executive Forum this past winter.

"Management may be an old-fashioned word. The real word may be leadership," adds Zemke. "The leader's role is to create a vision. Not to spend time kicking people in the backside."

That vision should be focused one just one thing: customer service, says Zemke.

Management must be constantly restating, in as many ways as it can, what the firm is trying to do for the customer.

Managers, he says can help improve their organization's service delivery by:

✓ Hiring new employees thoughtfully. "Hire an adequate number of people to serve your customers well, but hire them slowly. It's easier to take time up front than to regret it later," says Zemke.

✓ Spending time with front-line people and making heroes of exemplary service providers.

✓ Having a flexible but fair compensation system.

✓ Listening to front-line people.

✓ Making sure that sales and service personnel don't believe that they have to progress past dealing with customers to get ahead in your organization.

✓ Empowering employees to meet

### Third in a series on Zemke and service.

customer needs in a broad sense.

✓ Making sure employers always have the proper tools and training to provide quality customer service.

"The most important things a manager can do in a service organization is to create a culture focused on service and support the delivery of good service," says Zemke.

For more info: Ron Zemke, Performance Research Associates, Inc., 821 Marquette Ave., Suite 1820, Minneapolis, MN 55402; phone (612) 338-8523.

—Ron Hall



**Zemke: Help employees help clients.**

# TALK TO TERRA

## FOR TERRAMARK SPI

**When you want to take  
the guesswork out of spraying.**

Terramark SPI spray pattern indicator shows you exactly where you've applied liquid pesticides and fertilizers. Terramark's distinctive dark blue color helps you avoid overlaps and skips. Plus, it also helps you identify and minimize drift problems. With Terramark, there's no guesswork, no costly problems. You save time and money. So when you want to take the guesswork out of spraying, talk to Terra for Terramark SPI. You'll see the difference.

 **Terra**  
Terra International, Inc.



Circle No. 125 on Reader Inquiry Card