

## Breaking the ice

**When prospecting for commercial clients, get to the point and show you can deliver.**

■ Prospecting for and winning new commercial clients takes more than just being in the right place at the right time.

If you want that office park or corporate headquarters contract, you've got to prove you can handle the project to begin with, and have some references to back it up.

Here's what three buyers for major Indiana-based companies told us they like to see in a sales approach and presentation:

**Linda Byers, Eli Lilly Co.:**

● "Contractors have to know the business and know their own limitations." If you're mailing to a prospect for the first time, the brochure has to be an attention-getter.

● Keep your first presentation short and sweet. A portfolio with *good quality* photographs is important.

● Leave the boots at the office; dress like a pro to match the surroundings.

**Ed Grenier, American United Life Insurance Co.:**

● "Just about anything that complements the product we sell is an asset," and that includes the property.

● "The best advertising is the finished product. If I can drive by and see something that is beautiful and attractive, that's the best advertising there is."

● *Active* association membership is a plus.

● In the initial meeting, appearance, sense of humor and knowledge of the business all count.

**Nick Rush, Cummins Engine Co., Inc.:**

● "I talk to others in the profession to find out who they might recommend."

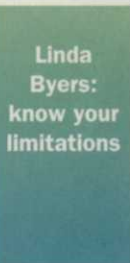
● "Be persistent; let us know you're out there. Be capable, professional and trustworthy. Show that you're able to live up to the expectations of the project."

● At the close: cost (not necessarily the lowest), quality, ease of delivery, communication skills and trustworthiness win the day.

—Terry McIver



**Nick Rush:**  
be  
persistent



**Linda Byers:**  
know your  
limitations



**Ed Grenier:**  
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**Primary salt damage is found along areas along roads.**

## Helping landscapes recover from snow and ice damage

**You and your customers might be surprised to see all the damage done by winter snow plows and salt. Here are some spring fix-it suggestions.**

by James E. Guyette

■ Even a successful winter snow and ice removal program can rub salt into the spring wounds of landscape managers when they take stock of the damage done to turf

and plants.

Heavy use of salt or other materials, including urea and other alternative products for ice-melting on sidewalks, streets and parking lots, can damage concrete and harm bordering lawns and ornamentals.

"Around homes, it's common for March rains to wash heavy amounts of residual ice-melting products into neighboring turf," says Dr. Bill Pound, turfgrass specialist at Ohio State University. "This raises the soil's salinity level. Salt draws water out of grass roots and burns roots that it touches. At high saline concentrations, this can damage or kill grass."

Pound receives phone calls every spring from people seeking advice about plants injured or killed by winter ice control. Most calls come from landscape contractors who maintain pavements around institutions such as hospitals, and who spread heavy amounts of deicing materials to clear sidewalks and driveways.

Pound says to use only enough material to melt the ice and snow, or alternatives such as sand, or sweeping up any excess salt residues before they're washed into neighboring lawns or flowerbeds.

In many cases hard rainfalls will wash salt out of the soil, allowing it to recover. "It all depends on how much rain and water you move through that profile," says Pound. But in some circumstances, turf damage may have already occurred. In late winter or early spring, yellow or brown strips up to two feet wide will appear along the pavement.

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**Use only enough de-icing material as is needed to melt the ice.**

