

TIME MANAGEMENT: MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY MINUTE

Wasted time equals lost opportunity. Lost opportunity means lost profits.

■ Time, and how to manage it are crucial to your success. The adage, "time is money," is especially true in the landscape industry.

Here are some suggestions on how to maximize your "minute management:"

1) Limit your availability. Unexpected and unplanned interruptions and distractions can steal your day. Too much time away from the "main thing" has a negative impact on your business productivity and profitability.

2) Concentrate your phone calls. Try to devote a certain time of the day both to return and originate phone calls. Prior to each call, jot down the points you want to cover, and take notes during conversations.

3) Protect your "magic" minutes. Knowing when you operate at peak performance allows you to devote certain activi-

ties to certain times of the day.

4) Be aware of time. Start by keeping a stopwatch with you. After a while, your internal clock will take over.

5) Establish a common format for similar pieces of correspondence. However, always ensure that letters are personalized and signed.

6) Confirm appointments. Never assume a meeting is on. A simple phone call saves time and energy.

7) Don't be stuck in traffic. Invest in a cellular car phone. Let a customer or prospect know you're on the way or will be a few minutes late. You can also check messages and return important phone calls.

8) Plan your day the night before. Try to divide your daily activities by type.

9) Allow time for each activity. Plan how long each item on your daily to-do lists will take. This helps you keep track of whether you're on schedule or running behind.

10) Reduction leads to completion.

Look at a major project in bite-size chunks. Plan what can be completed daily and weekly. It will reduce anxiety and keep quality and workmanship high.

11) Don't get buried by paper. Try to touch each piece of paper only once, and file it, act on it, or throw it away. If you haven't touched it in six months, you probably never will.

12) Set priorities. Rank duties from most important to least important.



The qualities of LEADERSHIP

Gaining 'four-star buy-ins' from employees means being enthusiastic, empathetic and more.

■ Even if you're not a natural-born leader, you can become one, according to Jim Perrone of Perrone-Ambrose Associates, Chicago, Ill.

Perrone, speaking at the Midwest Grounds Management Conference this summer, asked the audience what they thought employees want and expect most from their leaders. Here are the responses:

● integrity/trust/confidence,

- two-way communication,
- a sense of direction/vision,
- positive mental attitude,
- technical competence, and
- sincerity.

All supervisors are not leaders, Perrone said. He also noted that "we want to move away from the idea that a leader is superior. He or she just has a different area of responsibility."