

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

is a proud member of these
green industry professional
organizations:



Associated Landscape Contractors of America,
12200 Sunrise Valley Dr., Suite 150, Reston,
VA; (703) 620-6363.

American Association of Nurserymen (National
Landscape Association), 1250 I St. NW, Suite
500, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 789-2900.

Golf Course Superintendents Association of
America, 1421 Research Park Dr., Lawrence, KS
66049-3859; (913) 841-2240.

International Society of Arboriculture, P.O. Box
908, Urbana, IL 61801; (217) 328-2032.

International Turfgrass Society, Crop & Soil
Environmental Sciences, VPI-SU, Blacksburg, VA
24061-0403; (703) 231-9796.



National Arborist Association, The Meeting
Place Mall, P.O. Box 1094, Amherst, NH 03031-
1094; (603) 673-3311.

National Golf Foundation, 1150 South U.S.
Highway One, Jupiter, FL 33477; (407) 744-
6006.

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation, 2021 Coffey Rd.,
Columbus, OH 43210; (614) 292-2601.



Professional Grounds Management Society, 120
Cockeysville Rd., Suite 104, Hunt Valley, MD
21031; (410) 584-9754.



Professional Lawn Care Association of America,
1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135,
Marietta, GA 30068-2112; (404) 977-5222.

Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment,
1155 15th St. NW, Suite 900, Washington, D.C.
20005; (202) 872-3860.



Sports Turf Managers Association, 401 N.
Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611-4267; (312)
644-6610.

Turf and Ornamental Communicators Associa-
tion, 421 West Travelers Trail, Burnsville, MN
55337; (612) 894-2414.

AS WE SEE IT

JERRY ROCHE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



There's always room for managerial improvement

You may think that you are doing everything you can to make your business or maintenance department the most efficient it can be.

But you're probably not.

Managing effectively—especially for those of us without degrees in business administration—is a never-ending learning experience. So, as we begin a new growing season, a review of the expert tips offered in a long list of winter educational seminars is perhaps in order:

● **Choose employees carefully, and treat them respectfully.** Fire fast, but hire slowly. Hire personalities opposite of yours so you have a good balance of talent. Do everything you can—good pay, good working environment, a wide variety of benefits and perks—to keep your best employees.

● **Take your customer relations to another level.** Answer every question and handle every complaint quickly and effectively. If you don't have a pager or cellular phone, get one immediately.

● **Communicate.** Personally see your most important customers—for golf course superintendents, that would be members of the greens committee—at least once, and preferably more often, during the off-season. During the growing season, see them at least once a month, in person, if not more. Use signs on the golf course, newsletters, informative lawn/landscape brochures, pamphlets and doorhangers. Answer mail—both written and voice—personally and quickly.

● **Computerize.** If you're already computerized, figure out new ways to use your computer. For instance, try adding a fax/modem so you can subscribe to information services like those offered by the Turfgrass Information File or the American Society of Landscape Architects.

● **Choose your dealer/distributor carefully.** Make sure your salesperson is knowledgeable. Ask about financing, rebate, lease and regional discount programs. Ask about back-up equipment. Ask about train-

ing. Ask for industry references.

● **Set up your own turfgrass test plots,** if possible. Use your own backyard, your business's lawn or—with permission and using a great deal of care—your customers' backyards. Ask suppliers for free trial products, and offer them results of your trials in return.

● **Get involved.** You only get out of your industry as much as you put in. Take an active role in local, state and/or national organizations. Do what you can, for as long as you can—whether it's a week, a month or three years.

● **Remember the importance of good media relations.** Let the local news outlets know of your successes. If you're contacted by reporters, be pleasant. If you're busy, say so, but suggest a good time to call back. Control the circumstances as much as possible. Don't be argumentative or antagonistic or afraid to talk. Remember to tell the media that you are an environmentalist, that creating a friendly environment for golfers and homeowners is your business, your livelihood.

● **Don't be afraid to change.** The green industry is ever evolving. Take advantage of new technologies.

● **Finally, have fun.** Learn to focus on things you can change rather than banging your head against the wall on things you can't change. Never undertake more than one stressful activity or project at a time. Delegate authority. And take 30 minutes a day to relax in your own way, whether it's playing basketball with the guys at lunch (as I do) or reading a chapter in a favorite book. Your mind and body are your most important tools. Take care of them.

Jerry Roche