

Never lose your hopes and dreams



Sue Gibson

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Executive Editor

The GIE Show is over for 1998, our turkey dinner is just a memory and we're in the thick of the holiday season. For many people in the green industry, it's a time when production slows—just as the personal demands of family, celebrations, shopping and socializing ratchet up. It's also the time many of us start thinking of new year's resolutions and allow ourselves to remember our great hopes and our wildest dreams.

Darn those things. They keep coming back to haunt us every year. It's not that they're bad; they're just distracting.

Too often, our hopes and dreams get in the way of getting the (real) job done, or so we think.

When we were little, hopes and dreams took simple and fairly attainable shapes: a new bike, the newest Barbie doll, a Hot Wheels set, a real quality baseball mitt. If we were good, we might get them.

Now, our hopes and dreams tend to be more elusive. In fact, they might be so elusive that

we have a hard time figuring out how to achieve them. In our world of work, we call these hopes and dreams our "vision." Often, our organization's vision is a pretty lofty thing, so lofty that it might be hard to translate into our day-to-day tasks and operations. This may be why it's easy to overlook our hopes and dreams in favor of putting out all those fires on a daily basis.

Ask any motivational speaker or "super-achiever" in any arena about hopes and dreams. They're real experts. To a man (and woman), they'll tell you how important and necessary it is to focus on your hopes and dreams. Some will probably say that you'll *never* reach your potential (personally or in business) without a clear vision of where you're going. I believe it, too.

So if our visions are so important, why are

they so easy to ignore? Why do most of us focus on today's task or yesterday's problem, when we should also keep an eye on the horizon? Maybe it's because we can understand our past and present, but the future is another thing entirely. It's so "iffy," we wonder if we can really achieve our visions. Maybe it's because being "good" just doesn't cut it—we also have to be smart, productive, creative, wonderfully knowledgeable and intuitive business people. Maybe it's because we might have to change to attain that vision, and changing anything—ourselves or our organizations—is a daunting task.

If you find yourself in this predicament of ignoring your vision, try to find some balance. Remember, it's all those hopes and dreams that got you into this business at the beginning, so you don't have to avoid them. Make sure you spend at least some time every day to remember them and focus on your reasons why. Don't short-change yourself or your organization. That vision is the one thing that will allow you to be proactive; otherwise, you'll just be reactive and maybe not so effective.

You don't have to spend your entire day peering into the future, but you should remember why you started and understand where you want to go. **LM**