



EDITOR'S NOTE

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Don't wing it

You've heard them all, right? *Failing to plan is planning to fail. Plans are useless; planning is indispensable. Plan your work and work your plan.*

They're clichés, but I like them. Unfortunately, we all know liking a motivational quote doesn't mean you always live by its tenets.

I have to confess, I'm not "enthused" by the planning process like columnist Bruce Wilson is ("The power of planning," page 14). But I know Bruce is right when he says plans can be road maps to success and great tools for tracking performance and improvement. And I do love the feeling of having a plan in place, especially when I know *how* I'm going to tackle the tasks before me.

It was with that in mind that we devised the "how to" theme for this year's annual Business Planner edition of *Landscape Management*.

Strategic, long-range plans are vital, but sometimes you also need

practical planning tips. Often, these ideas can be as simple as having a protocol in place or having the proper mindset for how you'll handle a given situation.

That's what we have for you here, starting on page 19. Twenty-one industry insiders share "how to" prepare for and deal with many business-limiting challenges.

Consultant and former ValleyCrest exec Bill Arman shares the importance of scripting how an employee termination will go so it doesn't come back to bite you ("How to fire an employee," page 46).

LM columnist Kevin Kehoe offers an example of a company that grew in 2012 by making some predictions about labor costs, gas prices, interest rates and internal processes—and laying out how it would deal with them throughout the year. It's a must-read as you get ready for 2013. (See "How to prepare for next year" on page 34.)

Contractors Roger and Sue McCarthy share their key to a successful business and marriage: having a plan for when they talk about work and when they don't ("How to work effectively with your spouse," page 50).

The common denominator among these and the 18 other expert-written "how to" stories in this issue? Don't wing it and hope things turn out well. Plan to succeed.

Let this issue of *Landscape Management* be your guide.

"Strategic plans are vital, but sometimes you also need practical planning tips."

Landscape Management

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