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visit to Tunica Casino and Shops

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Turfgrass Producers International

Roundtable Forum—Wednesday, July 19

Share Concerns, Experiences, Insight and Suggestions with Your Peers

Whether you're looking for a solution, wanting to share ideas or just glean information on issues that are important to you, be sure to join other attendees at the Roundtable Forum, 12:45 pm to 2:45 pm, Wednesday, July 19 at The Peabody Memphis hotel. When registering for the Convention, be sure to check "Y" on the Roundtable Forum slot so TPI can better plan the amount of food for participants.

Here is a list of table topics you can choose from
Family/Estate Planning—Planning for your family's future

Credit & Collections—Good collectors deserve credit

Irrigation—Effective use of water

Turf Issues Outside U.S.—Issues of importance to International Members

Turf Farm Innovations—Using automation, GPS & electronics to cut costs

Trucking Regulations—Who decides if my load of sod is safe and legal?

TPI Website—What TPI's website has to offer

Marketing Data—What research data is needed to effectively market turf

Benefits of Licensed Grasses—Benefits of licensed warm-season grasses

TPI Conference & Convention—Making great meetings even better

Junior Delegates—Table Exclusive session for young people in turfgrass

The Future of *Turf News*—Talk with *Turf News* Editor & Editorial Advisors

ASK THE EXPERTS—(2 round tables)
Talk with ITPF Research Advisors

ASK THE EXPERTS—Talk with TPI Speaker

ITPF Cookbook—Share ideas and get info about the ITPF Cookbook



TPI Summer Convention & Field Days ITPF Auction to Include: K&W Big Roll Harvester and Ultimate Travel TPI Study Tour!

Bring your checkbook and be prepared to bid on two great offerings during the Field Day noon break. First is the RL 30 Big Roll Harvester featuring a fully-floating head, 100% self-contained hydraulic system, a gear reduction 2-stage 450 PTO pump that requires lower PTO rpm, and much more, contributed by K&W Products.

Next is the Post-Conference TPI

Australia Study Tour (February 11-21, 2007) between Cairns (north) and Canberra (south), including the Great Barrier Reef, Blue Mountains, Sydney and Stadium Australia, as well as opportunities to see grasses in unique Australia settings (excludes air fare), contributed by Ultimate Travel.

Auction proceeds go to ITPF Research and Education Programs.



How to Hire the Right Talent

Too often, employers hire the wrong people for their organization because of the perceived need to hire someone right away. As a result, they fall into the same pattern they've always used to seek employees, and they're less than pleased with the results. But good talent does exist; you just have to know how to find it. The key is to try a new approach for locating top-notch talent. When you do, you'll realize that finding exactly who you are looking for is actually quite simple. The following tips will enable you to find the right talent so you can make your organization a success.

Seek Seasoned Employees

Many organizations today employ young, inexperienced people who think and act like they know it all. Having young, dynamic and energetic people within your organization is great. You also need to have seasoned individuals to mentor and teach the younger employees. It's a win-win situation. These experienced people take great pride in being asked to help develop the younger workers, and the younger workers can gain a great depth of knowledge from these people with so much experience.

Consider More Than One Job Category

If you can't seem to find the right talent, you may be looking for the wrong type of employees. Most employers automatically think they have to hire full-time, permanent individuals. Re-evaluate the position for which you're hiring and then determine: 1) Is it really a permanent position? 2) Is there enough work to justify bringing someone on full-time? 3) Or, would you be better off hiring part-time people such as consultants or a virtual assistant? This major evaluation could save your company lots of money.

When you consider other job categories besides full-time permanent, you can alleviate a financial burden for your company, and you may be able to

bring in more creative individuals. Thinking you can only hire full-time permanent people limits your possibilities, and that may be why you can't seem to hire the right talent.

Don't Rush

One major mistake employers make is being in a hurry to fill an empty position. Slow down and analyze what needs to be done and what type of person you are looking for to join your organization. Consider all of the possibilities. Can you move people around within your organization? Do any employees have cross-over duties that you can combine into one position? Maybe you'll find that you can combine two jobs previously done by two different people, thus freeing one who would be ideal for the position you are seeking to fill.

Consider a Different Demographic

When looking to fill a position, don't forget about retirees and senior citizens. You can find a lot of talent from these people who don't want to work every day or full days, but they have incredible experience. The experience they have and the knowledge they bring may be exactly what your organization needs. They have been in the workforce for many years and know how to work, and they won't need to be taught the subtle nuances of business.

Don't Hire From a Piece of Paper

When you first try to fill a position,

you probably have a wish list in mind of exactly what skills and qualities you're looking for. However, if you find someone with the right attitude, you will likely end up getting more than you were looking for and you will be more satisfied with your decision. You might have to look for a slightly different skill set than what you originally wanted, but the important thing is to find the person who will mix well with your current team. In the end, you will be better off hiring the person with the right attitude. You can always train for job functions, but you can't train somebody's attitude.

Get Demonstrated Results

Before you hire someone, be sure you ask for and get demonstrated results. For example, if you're hiring a salesperson, you want to know how he or she increased sales, by what percentage and in what period of time. Don't stop at asking for these results; verify them as well. This will give you a better indication of whether they will be able to perform what you will be expecting.

Make the Right Decisions

Experience often teaches us that hiring individuals for your organization is difficult; hiring the right talent is even more so. The truth is, it doesn't have to be. Approach the hiring process differently than you have in the past. And when you do, your organization will benefit greatly from the decisions you have made.



Tom Reilly's Rules for Value-Added Selling

1. Add value, not cost; sell value, not price!
2. Sell to the customer's needs, not necessarily against the competition.
3. Promise a lot and deliver more.
4. Plan every sales call.
5. Listen more, talk less on a sales call.
6. Sell all three dimensions of value: your product, your company, and YOU.
7. Remind the customer often of your added value and everything you do for them.
8. It's important to know where to call; it's imperative to know where NOT to call.
9. Cutting price is only one way to deal with a price objection.
10. Treat your customers as if they were prospects, because they are exactly that for your competition.

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Marketing Tip

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Shrewder Computing

Technology Drives Business—
Learn or Get Left Behind

"Do it my way or die"— Making the Sale to Your Only Customer

The post-World War II mindset, based on monumental pent-up demand, is missing today. Everything from advertising and telemarketing, to cold calls and trying to get through the door is ineffective. Frustration is felt everywhere in today's business.

Get comfortable with the new reality of "one customer" which the Internet facilitates and is epitomized in the iPod genius that might be more cultural than technological. It complements the "stay out of my space" mentality of today's customers who send the message, "I want what I want the way I want it when I want it." Shopping the Internet reaffirms there's only one customer: Me. The iPod pushes the envelope further with its implied message "I'm the only one who counts; do it my way or die."

What it means for businesses

What are businesses to do with this "customer of one" reality? How are they to connect with the customer without wasting time and money? Consider the following.

Erase the past from your mind—

For example, the effectiveness of the once powerhouse *Yellow Pages* has been declining in the face of Internet search capabilities. Yet, many businesses have continued to dutifully buy ad space. It's dangerous to cling to what worked yesterday.

Stand up to stand out—Far too often, companies talk a good line, but they're actually risk averse, always playing it safe, not wanting to really put themselves on the line.

The president of a commercial printing company in Pennsylvania made a point of describing how the company delivers on time. It's extensive in-house capabilities give it the ability to meet tight deadlines that competitors are unable to achieve due to dependence on outside suppliers. Since on-time delivery is important to printing customers, a consultant recommended that on-time delivery become a cornerstone of the

company's branding: "Your job is free if we don't deliver on-time." The guarantee would be accompanied by an appropriate disclaimer. Yet, the president backed away. If something is crucial to attracting and holding customers, then step up and figure how to deliver on what the customer wants.

More frequent contacts count—A survey of an insurance organization's customers revealed that frequent contact reaps positive results. It plays an important role in shaping how customers feel about other factors such as price and service. Those clients who received the most contacts by the insurance agency also indicated their loyalty by scoring the highest for renewing their insurance with the agency. Whether it's regular visits, receiving helpful information or asking their opinion, systematic contacts have a positive impact.

Be there all the time—Too many companies play the game of marketing roulette by placing their message in one media. For instance, the line waiting to buy the highest-priced advertising is for the Super Bowl. As it becomes more difficult to reach people, expect the annual Super Bowl advertising ante to keep going up.

Reaching people today calls for a comprehensive and diversified strategy aimed at reaching a host of sliver-thin niches with a variety of activities and includes everything from e-mail, web ads, direct mail, public relations, events, media advertising and community relations programs. The goal is to engage customers all the time in a multitude of ways to build brand awareness. Anything less is ineffective because the customers we take away from someone else would go elsewhere in the future. Breaking that pattern means being there all the time.

We need to change our thinking and recognize that an endless supply of customers has come to an end. The only way to attract and maintain customers today is one at a time.



In 1908, Henry Ford's automobiles became affordable for average Americans, due to the company's increased productivity and to reduced costs from a reinvented assembly line. Ford's innovative use of technology sparked a revolution that changed America and the world forever and drove many of his competitors out of business.

The business landscape has changed since Ford's days but competition, innovation and change remain constant, and technology is driving them all.

Many small business owners use computer technology grudgingly. They aren't taking advantage of technological innovations to improve their businesses. Some are content with doing things the way they've always been done. Meanwhile, some of their competitors are using technology to do things better and more efficiently or are creating change that allows them to offer additional products and services.

Every small business owner has access to tools and information that are as powerful as what's used by large companies and governments. Take advantage of this power. Learn what's available and how it can be used. You may choose to take technical classes, subscribe to business technology publications or teach yourself by reading books and taking self-directed courses on-line and on CD.

Don't dismiss the need to learn how to use this modern technology just because you don't understand it or don't see how it applies to your business. Don't believe you can continue to have success without modernizing your business through technology.

Source: US Chamber of Commerce

TPI Action

TPI Membership Reaches All-Time Record High!

As of April 30, 2006, TPI membership surpassed any previous records! The increase is attributed to a number of successful efforts including the increase of member benefits. New members, although mostly from North America, also include some from other countries. Credit also goes to various regional turf groups who have taken the initiative to promote the benefits of TPI membership as well as those of their own local associations.

BONUS Event Announced for TPI Summer Convention

On Wednesday, July 19, a special Meet the Exhibitors Reception will be held from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm at The Peabody Memphis hotel. The event will allow attendees and exhibitors to visit in a casual atmosphere. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served and beverages for purchase will be available.

TPI Annual Business Meeting Set for Wednesday, July 19, 10:15 am

All Class "A" (turf producer) and Class "B" (supplier) members are encouraged to participate in the 2006 TPI Annual Business meeting where your voice counts. In addition to voting to elect new TPI Officers and Trustees, attendees of this year's meeting will also vote on a by-law change to increase the Nominating Committee from four to five individuals.

2006 Media Kit on CD-ROM—A First!

2006 marked the first time the TPI Media Kit was produced on a CD-ROM for mailing to newspapers, consumer and trade publications. Another first is this year's mailing to universities, extension specialists, green industry associations and all TPI members. TPI members will find the Lawn Institute section full of general information of interest to consumers, and the Turf Resource Center section primarily targets industry trade professionals and educators.

To receive additional information on any of these items, contact the TPI Office

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Fax: 847/649-5678

e-mail: info@TurfGrassSod.org

Website: <http://www.TurfGrassSod.org>

By removing turf, we will be negating the benefits that the turf provides:

- ▲ Turf protects groundwater quality and improves recharge.
- ▲ The turf-soil ecosystem entraps and biodegrades polluting organic chemicals.
- ▲ Turf dissipates heat, reducing energy required to cool nearby homes and commercial buildings. (In an Arizona study, it was determined that soil temperatures, at a xeriscape site were generally 8° C (46° F) higher than soil temperatures under turf. The higher soil temperatures would very likely translate into higher air temperatures).
- ▲ Turf abates noise and reduces glare.
- ▲ Well-maintained turf and landscaping increase property values.
- ▲ Turf is a low-cost, durable, smooth surface for play and relaxation during outdoor leisure activities.
- ▲ Natural turf decreases injuries to sports participants.
- ▲ Well-maintained turf and natural scenery have positive therapeutic effects, as measured by heart rate and blood pressure.
- ▲ Testing has shown that nitrogen leaching losses are significantly greater on a mixed-species landscape than on turfgrass.

(Note: this list was excerpted from January/February 2005 *Turf News* article *Cash For Grass—A Cost Effective Method to Conserve Landscape Water?*, by Sylvan Addink, Ph.D., Certified Professional Agronomist)

Business Management

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