



BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

AMERICAN SOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

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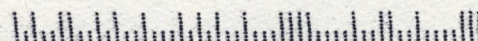
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Rush to:

FILE

DECEMBER / JANUARY, 1993

To Make Your Business Better...

ASPA OFFERS DIVERSE PROGRAM IN NEW ORLEANS

In a city known for its fine dining, great music and antebellum history, ASPA will produce a Midwinter Conference educational program and exhibition filled with an array of business improvement ideas for turfgrass sod farms, February 3-5, 1993. While New Orleans may be known for its light-hearted and easy-going attitude, ASPA's program is intended for the serious-minded turfgrass sod producer who wants to learn how to succeed.

According to ASPA Vice President and Conference Chairman Richard Schiedel, Greenhorizon Group of Farms, Cambridge, ON, the educational program has been divided into presentations on warm and cool season sod production, business operations, environmental issues and marketing. ASPA members, leading turfgrass researchers and experienced experts in a particular subject have been scheduled to make presentations during the three day event. The educational program will open with a general session Thursday morning, February 3, followed in the afternoon with a series of six concurrent presentations. The following day, six more concurrent sessions will open the educational program, followed after lunch by another general educational program. In addition to the formal educational program, exhibitors will also be making presentations in the exhibit area by means of "Tech Sessions" for small groups during each of the three days the exhibits are open.

Complete programs, registration materials and hotel reservation forms have been sent to all ASPA members; however, additional copies are available from the ASPA office by calling 708/705-9898.

MEMBERS INVITED TO ASPA COMMITTEES
MEETING IN NEW ORLEANS FEBRUARY 2

Even before the official start of the ASPA Midwinter Conference in New Orleans, all ASPA members will have an opportunity to provide direction and new ideas to the organization through ASPA's committees. All members are invited to join in the following committee meetings which will be held Tuesday, February 2 from 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm:

Magazine Advisory, Chairman Ed Zuckerman
 Legal & Taxation, Ben Copeland
 Business Management, Wayne Thorson
 Marketing, David Doguet
 Convention & Conference, Richard Schiedel

Specific meeting room assignments will be available in the hotel, or they can be obtained by contacting the ASPA Office at 708/705-9898 approximately one week prior to the Conference.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD PEOPLE...
TO GET THEMSELVES ORGANIZED

As the production aspects of turfgrass sod operations begin to wind down in most parts of the world, it's an excellent time to begin thinking and planning ahead to be better organized for the onslaught of next year's business requirements. By starting to practice the following time-management steps now, they'll be familiar and comfortable when the rush hits again.

1. Plan ahead to find the time...take a few minutes at the beginning or end of each day to plan.
2. Make a list...jot down five or six items you can realistically accomplish today.
3. Prioritize...rank the items A-B-C or 1-2-3, etc., to help identify which items need your attention first and which could be delayed in an emergency.
4. Hit the list (early)...don't procrastinate, start doing what's on your list first, trying to complete what's on your list early and not at the very last minute.
5. Reward yourself...even a little check-mark beside a completed task can be a reward, giving you a sense of accomplishment and control.
6. Set realistic goals...start with the day-to-day needs, but expand your view to monthly, quarterly and annual goals. This will take you right back to item #1, planning, making a list, etc.

With just a little effort now, your busiest times won't be as bad because you'll be in the habit of managing your time efficiently, allowing you to manage projects rather than the emergencies managing you.

LUMBAR BELTS CAN SAVE BACKS AND BUCKS

Wherever there's lifting, there's sure to be back injuries, followed very closely by workers' compensation claims, followed by increased insurance premiums. A relatively new device may be able to break this chain.

A company recently required all 1,000 of its warehouse workers to wear lumbar support belts and worker compensation claims for back injuries declined 58% in one year.

ASPA

Informational Communications Seminar

February 3, 1993 • The Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans

TOPIC:
"Building Better Working Relationships Between Family Farm Members"

Who Should Attend?

This Special, Pre-Conference Seminar is specifically designed for ASPA members and their families. Anyone involved with a family farming or business operation is urged to attend.

Registration is restricted to personnel of ASPA member firms and their families. Membership in ASPA can be obtained at the time of seminar enrollment.

ASPA encourages owners, operators and members of their families to attend and gain valuable knowledge and insights that will enable you to Reduce Stress, Avoid Conflict, and Improve Communications. Discounted registration fees are available for all 'additional' representatives from the same farm/firm.

Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until seminar capacity is reached.

Location:

ASPA's Informational Communications Seminar will be held at The Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Instructor:

Dr. Ron Hansen, Director of the Agribusiness Program for the College of Agriculture at the University of Nebraska will present this day-long workshop. This seminar will identify and emphasize the "human elements" that are often overlooked in a family farming operation or family business. The program will cover such topics of interest as stress and conflict management, human relationships and interpersonal communications skills.

Seminar Program:

7 a.m. - 7 p.m.	ASPA Registration Desk Open
8 a.m. - 9 a.m.	ASPA Hosted Self-service Coffee
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Seminar Program
Noon	Seminar Luncheon
	Included in the Seminar package will be all necessary study materials, refreshment breaks and a complimentary luncheon.

Hotel Reservations:

The Fairmont Hotel, New Orleans will be our host hotel. Please make your reservations early – Reservations requested after January 3, 1993 are subject to availability. Rooms will be \$110 single / \$115 double occupancy, plus taxes. To make your hotel reservations, contact The Fairmont at 1-800-527-4727. Mention the ASPA Pre-Conference Seminar in order to obtain the special room rate.

Registration & Cancellations:

First individual from an ASPA member farm/firm\$75.00
Additional Registrants from the same company\$50.00
All Cancellation/Refund requests must be made in writing to ASPA.
After February 1, 1993, no refunds can be made.

ASPA SEMINAR ENROLLMENT FORM

Informational Communications Seminar

Please enroll the following:

FIRM _____ PHONE () _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE/PROV _____ ZIP _____

FULL NAME

FIRST/NICK NAME

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

FEES:

First registrant \$75.00. Additional registrants from the same company \$50.00 each.

Please enroll _____ people

(Sorry, ASPA cannot bill you. All fees must be paid in advance in (U.S. Funds) and accompany this form)

Enclosed is \$ _____

☐ My check payable to American Sod Producers Association is enclosed.

☐ Charge my _____ VISA _____ AM EXP _____ MasterCard Acct. # _____ Exp. Date _____

☐ Please send me complete information about the Feb. 3 - 5 ASPA Midwinter Conference.

Signature _____

Mail to: ASPA, 1855-A Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

----- (DETACH AND RETURN) -----

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AMERICAN SOD PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Informational Communications Seminar

FEBRUARY 3, NEW ORLEANS

EVALUATE YOURSELF AS A MANAGER

Prepared by Chris Hope, Manderley Sod, North Gower, Ontario
Member, ASPA Business Management Committee

With a large portion of ASPA's membership being owner-managed businesses, self-evaluation of your managerial skills is imperative. How you manage your affairs is something that should be checked continuously to provide constant improvement throughout your business career.

When evaluating yourself, it is easier to focus on individual skills such as organization, time management, leadership/people skills and fiscal management. On a monthly basis you should take time to review each category in a process of self-evaluation. In consideration of your overall goals and objectives for the month, how did your skills in each category effect the outcome? If these periods of self-evaluation are timed to coincide with review of financial results for the same period you tend to be more critical of yourself.

Once you have identified the areas that require improvement, there are several methods of improving your skills. Business literature, be it magazines or books can be the most inspirational source of information (beware of fads!). Business seminars are another source which can be more expensive; however, they are more intense and subject oriented. Taking in ASPA pre-conference seminars is a great way to start. Exposure to other business people can be an effective method as well. Conversing about problems and personal approaches and solutions can be quite enlightening and entertaining!

Your management style is something that will change continuously and will develop over time through your experiences and exposure to others. In order to improve your skills quicker than the competition it is important to go through a process of self-evaluation on a regular basis.

MEMBER MARKETING TIP -- NICHE MARKETING

Prepared by Bill Huber, Huber Ranch Sod Nursery, Schneider, IN
Member, ASPA Business Management Committee, & ASPA Trustee

In order to begin this type of marketing, you have to become knowledgeable and comfortable with the industry and your place in it. Regardless, if you have a large company or a "one man show," you should come to each ASPA convention and become active on a committee. It is surprising how many people you meet and how much you learn about operations like yours all over the world.

The next step is to look at your particular operation and determine if it is unique in any way such as your soil, location, your particular talents or needs of your market. See if some of the things you have learned as being possible, can be applied to the needs of your customers or the strong points of your operation. From there on, your progress is only limited by your honesty to your customers, your energies and of course Mother Nature.

IRS CLAMPING DOWN ON 'INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS'
20-Factor Test Clarifies Issue

As the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) continues to become more and more active in the area of independent contractor vs. employee definitions, business owners must take additional precautions to assure that the relationship they intend is in fact what the IRS will find. Failing to properly classify an individual could mean additional employment taxes and even penalties and interest.

The IRS developed the following 20-factor test as part of Revenue Ruling 87-41 to classify employee-independent contractor status:

1. Degree of Control -- The organization should not have the right to control the method or manner of the job to be performed.
2. Right to Discharge -- The organization cannot terminate the contractor as long as he or she meet his or her obligations under the contract.
3. Right to Delegate Work -- The contractor can bring in whomever he or she wants to accomplish the purpose of the contract.
4. Hiring Practices -- The contractor should have the right to hire and fire assistants that he or she uses in performing the contract.
5. Payment Practices -- An independent contractor should be paid by the job, as opposed to by the hour, week or month.
6. Furnish Training. The organization should not provide any type of training for inexperienced workers.
7. Skill -- Independent contractors are generally viewed as skilled workers.
8. Duration of Relationship -- The contractor should be hired for a specified time period. Continuous work implies an employee relationship.
9. Control Over Hours of Work -- An independent contractor should be allowed to set his or her own hours.
10. Independent Trade -- The contractor should be free to work for any number of persons or firms simultaneously.
11. Furnishings of Tools -- The contractor should be able to provide his or her own tools.
12. Place of Work -- If possible, the independent contractor should perform his or her job off the organization's premises.
13. Profit and Loss -- The contractor should have the opportunity for profit or loss.
14. Intent of the Parties -- The parties' intent to create an independent contractor relationship should be documented.
15. Principal in Business -- The contractor should be a principal in his or her own business.
16. Sequence of Work -- The contractor should be able to determine the sequence of the work performed outside of the organization's control.
17. Reports Required -- The contractor should not be required to submit regular oral or written reports or to attend organization meetings.
18. Same Work as Regular Employees -- The organization should not have the independent contractor do the same type of work as its regular employees.
19. Integration -- The organization should not engage an independent contractor to do something that is a part of the day-to-day operations of the company.
20. Industry Customs -- The industry should have a definite custom regarding worker classification.