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From the President's Pen...



It's the first day of Spring, but outside the window here it's snowing. But it won't be long and the snow will be gone and we will be able to smell the fresh turned dirt as the farmers go to the fields. Business here has already picked up as they pull those tractors from the back of the shed and get them ready for spring field work.

The board of directors continues to find new ways to make the NTPDA a top tier organization. After the meeting in Corpus Christi in January we re-formed the membership committee to help add to our already long list of member benefits. The first thing we discussed was the formerly named 'summer board meeting'.

Contrary to popular belief, the summer meeting is not exclusively for board members! Any members are welcome to attend!

This year we will be in the Twin Cities and we have an impressive list of events that you won't want to miss. Our friends at DLS are hosting some of these events and they promise to be not only educational, but also a lot of fun. I know for a fact that when this group gets together it's like a family reunion. We learn, laugh, sometimes cry (we miss you Doug) and we catch up with old and new friends. Other benefits are also being added to the list like identity theft protection and apparel discounts, but also improvement to current benefits that we have had already. If you don't know what those benefits are, go to the NTPDA website for the list, and keep checking on it because it will change. Any one or two of those benefits will more than pay for your \$400 membership, and using a few more of those benefits will more than pay for your trip to the



Annual Conference and Trade show. And when you attend that show you will learn about things in our industry that will help you put a lot more money back in your pocket.

These meetings are not just for the owners or managers of your business!! Bring your counter person, shipper, bookkeeper or teardown crew. Trust me, when they meet with their peers and make new friends you will find that they will earn back more than that investment you made.

Happy Spring!! See you in July in MSP!

Scott Schelling **Rock Valley Tractor Parts**

In our Summer Bulletin 2016 Doug wrote in his President's Pen:

"It's easy to get locked into the urgent stuff. But what is urgent may not be what is really important and it can really be difficult to tell the two apart. As an example,



I had taken a Friday off to work on my pickup when my daughter called and told me she was going vaulting on that day with her old coach. When she found out I had the day off, she asked me to ride along. Now, my old truck is pretty tired and in constant need of 'TLC,' but I can always work on it tomorrow. Because the important thing is spending time with her (even if it's not the most productive thing I could do). That truck or the memories of that truck are not going to keep me in my old age! So...call an old friend, go take the kids or grand kid fishing . . . just because. Stop and have a Coke float with a friend (anyone remember doing that?). These are the important things to do."

Lear NTPDA family,

There will never be enough time of words to ell all of you now greatful my family and I are for all that you have done for my ited. Never in noting for him. Must of you in sore know that my dad was a sample man quet and offen prefored to be by rimself It was definitely a humit . But being a fact of this family and association meant the world to num. It often talked of each of you tordy. Thank you all for being so welcoming, patient, and helpful we can all admitt he was trying at times but word to all he could to help anyone who was in need.

Before my dock passed he top me that it he could be authing when he died he wanted to be a tree. Well .. what the old man wants the old man goto my remains were cremented and he will be ploused unto a tree this commer to Thank you all so much for your donations and for raising money for my dad this year. I hope you all know how made to mease to him to wish about do more to show how much to prevent to him to wish about to more to show how much I applead to each type. Thank you again

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Message from Phyllis



Happy Spring! I can't believe it's already April. I know those of you up North are really ready for some warm weather. In Texas we've already had temperatures in the low 90's...it's too early in the year for it to be that hot! But I will take the heat over the cold any day. Speaking of cold...that's what it was in Corpus Christi for our annual conference and trade show! Corpus is usually in the 60-70's in January but when we were there it was freezing...literally. But in Texas it can change overnight and by Saturday we were outside walking around in the beautiful sunshine!

We had a great show and I appreciate everyone that made it work. Our displayers, sponsors, attendees, Mike that set up the trade show, Kim that kept it all running smoothly and our great Board of Directors. Thank you all for your continued support of YOUR association.

In this issue we will highlight the Conference and Trade Show held in Corpus Christi this past January. We will also pay our respects to our friend and colleague, Doug Swanson, that we will all miss. Take some time to peruse the Bulletin

About Our Members

We would like to increase the information on our "Members Page." This is more like a personal information page. New grandchild, wedding, anniversary, etc. Send it to us...we love hearing from you!

This is Shiloh Renee' Campbell, granddaughter of Kim Carroll. This picture was taken in February. She loves to smile and loves her Nana K.



and find out how you can join your fellow NTPDA members on a cruise following our trade show next year in Mobile. Also, find information regarding our Summer Board Meeting in July. And...as you'll read about in Scott's President's Pen...you don't have to be a board member to join us in the Twin Cities in July!

Make sure to check out page 20 and read all about our fellow member - Southeast Tractor Parts. This is a great article about Eric and Linda Benton - longtime NTPDA Members. Eric & Linda...we appreciate you giving NTPDA and Allied a plug! Thanks so much!

And...on page 7 you'll see the exciting news that Plastics Unlimited has to share with our members. Terry and Nancy have been huge supporters of the NTPDA by displaying and always bringing a fun aspect to the trade show! We look forward to getting to know Dakota and Travis.

We appreciate our members' contribution to the Bulletin - Scott Schelling, Terri Stevens, Michael Libbie, Liz Fawcett and Steven Haas....thank you!

Have a wonderful Spring/Summer!

Phyllis

Thank you Cabela's for donating a cooler to raffle off as a fund-raiser for St. Jude's. We appreciate your generosity!

Calling all Cruisers!

July 15, 2018 is the deadline to sign up for your cruise out of Mobile following our Conference and Trade Show!

Here is the itinerary:

Monday, January 21 - Depart Mobile 4 PM

Tuesday, January 22 - Fun Day at Sea

Wednesday, January 23 - Progreso, Mexico

Thursday, January 24 - Cozumel, Mexico

Friday, January 25 - Fun Day at Sea

Saturday, January 25 - Arrive Mobile 8 AM

Send me an email - phyllis@ntpda.com so I can get you signed up for this fun filled adventure at sea!







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The NTPDA Board of Directors, members and staff would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our Sponsors!

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Entertainment – Early Arrival Party Wednesday Sponsored by Memo Corporation

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Thursday
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Continental Breakfast
Thursday
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Thursday
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Lunch
Thursday
Sponsored by Allied Information Networks
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Cocktail Reception
Thursday
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Memo Corporation

Welcome Reception
Thursday
Sponsored by Schaefer Enterprises

Breakfast Trade Show Area
Friday
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Refreshments during Trade Show Hours Friday Sponsored by Steiner Tractor Parts, Inc.

Cocktails
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Dinner Friday Sponsored by Allied Information Networks

Entertainment
Friday
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Join us for the Summer Board Meeting...

Embassy Suites Downtown Minneapolis



July 12-15, 2018

Remember you don't need to be a Board Member to join us. It's a great time to visit and network with your fellow NTPDA members. Please let Phyllis know if you'd like to attend!



Plastics Unlimited is excited to announce new ownership. Travis and Dakota Kieffer purchased Plastics Unlimited from Terry and Nancy Kieffer on January 1st, 2018.

Terry and Nancy plan to continue working at Plastics Unlimited for many more years to make this a seamless transition. Terry and Nancy would like to thank all past and present employees, family, friends, customers, and everyone in the community who has supported Plastics Unlimited over the past 25 years. We are all looking forward to a bright future!



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Great Conference and time with friends!











Greetings from

Greasy Girl

By Terri Stevens

recently met with a friend of mine who is a marketing specialist. She has advised me many times about my choices of advertising. To my surprise she told me that most of the area I am from do 47% on social media. I had made plans to doing some social advertising after the NTPDA meeting. We were informed and educated about the uses of social advertising.



However, I didn't realize the importance of the reviews. Almost all of the people that work for me use the reviews before they buy something or try a new restaurant etc. Being of the generation that isn't so connected to social networking I don't do that. So that is something that I am not very familiar with.

It is sort of scary to think every time someone comes into our businesses that they can go out to their car and rate us on a 1 to 5. And anyone connected to the internet can see that. So how is your parts counter people doing? Would they score high or low? How do you score when you try to sell something or interact with your employees?

I got to thinking about that. Do you realize that every time you have an interaction with someone they are rating you on a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being bad and 5 being great! So what would be your rating as a parent, as a spouse, as a friend employee, or employer?

I really do try and treat people by the golden rule...treat them as I would want to be treated. However, sometimes I will cut someone off in traffic, or say unkind things or even get angry and say something I should not say. My rating would go way down. In business you try and have more good reviews to offset the bad ones.

So how does God look at our lives? Does He give us a number on how we have lived that day? I don't think He does. If we have a relationship with Him He looks at us thru the eyes of Jesus His son and can't see the wrongs we have done. Jesus has covered our wrongs. But the main difference with God is He knows the heart. It doesn't matter how nice you try to be if your heart is wrong God knows it. I think if all of us would become more aware of the price that He paid and live our lives in a way that every day we strive to get a 5 in all the ways we have been with people then the love of God would show thru us and there wouldn't be so much darkness in this world.

As we approach spring and the change from winter to spring comes. Let us rejoice and be glad for the Lord is near. I am wishing you a wonderful spring and may we all realize that we need to strive everyday to score high in our ratings.

Be a Blessing and Be Blessed

Greasy

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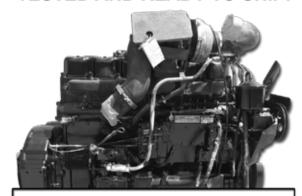
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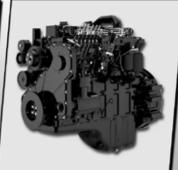
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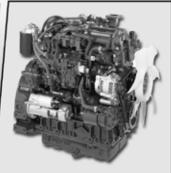
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Corpus Christi

New faces . . . lasting impressions . . . family

We had an amazing time visiting and building relationships. The weather was not 'Texas' weather but still much warmer than Canada. The hotel was wonderful aside from the construction happening on some people's patios, but we are tough, rural folk and managed just fine.

The training from Richard and Crystal was amazing. I can't begin to explain how crucial good training is and I

feel as though it was delivered this year. We learned about some tough leadership issues that everyone who deals with people encounter. We also learned about some of the tricks about social media and a little bit of a good intro to those

this crew of people it would be 'family'.

If I had only one word to describe

who are overwhelmed by the options.

The trade show was as good as I always remember it to be; we had some new faces that left some impressions (the Steiner Girls) and the tasty baklava from the gentlemen at Keba; these were just a couple of the great product conversations and good times shared.

As a new board member, and the youngest, I am excited for the upcoming term and very eager to learn from those around me – I feel like I'm among some folks that have a lot to teach (not an age reference, I promise) and I look forward to continuing our good times this summer at the Summer Conference in Minneapolis.

I also found out that not everyone knew that the Summer Conference was open to everyone – it's not just a board meeting! If it's anything like the Annual Conference and Trade Show, it's bound to be a great time! Now the banquet, that was something else! Phyllis outdid herself with the food choices and the music (again). There was a dance floor that got some good action with about a dozen of us dancing the banquet to a close. The auction was amazing! We had to explain to some new-comers that yes, mailboxes go for \$300 here and that's ok because it's all for a good cause. There was also the Chuck-challenge for Doug....Wow. Just Wow. If I had only one word to describe this crew of people it would be 'family'. The support and love showed that night, and all through the convention was astounding. A night to remember for sure.

> It didn't end there though (it rarely does); a few of us decided to stay an extra day in Texas for a deep-sea fishing adventure which turned into, well, an adventure! We arrive to Port Aransas

with fog as thick as pea soup and some less-than-equipped vessels. Some of the boats were still not fully repaired after Harvey made his way through so we didn't have radar or GPS on the boats which made for a very challenging hide and seek game with the breakers to get back into the jetty (I just learned those words so excuse me if I misused them....). After 8-10 foot swells, a good bout of sea sickness, and very frazzled captains, we called it after only 45 minutes on the water. We all decided that wasn't going to be the end of our day so we headed for breakfast, then naps, then some went for walks and shopping and some went to the USS Lexington – a dry-docked aircraft carrier turned museum; quite an impressive thing!

With the ever-skilled Phyllis working on reservations for our group, we finished off the day with 26 of us heading to Landry's for a delicious meal and farewells. It was an amazing trip and I am so excited to spend time with these folks again in July and January 2019; lots of laughs and learning.

Cheers,

—Liz Fawcett

2019 Conference & Trade Show - January 17-19, 2019

Renaissance - The Battle House Hotel & Spa Mobile, Alabama

NOTE: 2019's C&TS will begin on Thursday with our Early Arrival Party and conclude on Saturday. There will be one day "off" on Sunday and then the cruise will depart on Monday, January 21!

Please call the NTPDA for more information regarding the conference and trade show and the cruise! Can't wait to see you!





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Committee lembership

Last month the reconstituted Membership Committee of NTPDA held a telephone meeting and lots of ideas were floated. The first being the decision to let our membership know that YOU are welcome to attend Summer Smash, the meeting formally known as the Summer Board Meeting.

Here's the deal: For years the Summer Board Meeting has been open to any member of NTPDA but...the name alone...suggested it was only for leadership. We want to turn the event into a fun and educational effort open to everyone.

Other suggestions from the group:

- Enhance Benefits Package
- Include a Trial Membership Program
- Reactivate "concierge" (welcome wagon) program
- Incorporate Networking Exercises
- Build Up the Education Tracks for the **Annual Meeting**
- Develop New Member Outreach and **Orientation Programs**

And there were many more.

the Committee Currently President Scott are working on the details and the agenda but please mark down the dates: July 11-14 at the Embassy Suites in Minneapolis, MN. We'll be sending out more details in the coming weeks so watch for it!

Our goal is to listen to the Membership and be proactive in presenting real value for your membership dollars. We think we can do that with what we already have as well as building in new programs that are a true positive return on your investment. The Summer Smash is just the start.

Hope to see you there!

Michael P. Libbie is the owner of Insight Advertising, Marketing & Communications and does the only daily business news broadcast, Insight on Business the News Hour, in the Midwest.



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PROFILES IN PROGRESS



Associate member Steiner Tractor Parts made a big splash at our winter convention.

Brandi Erickson and Shannon Weber, Steiner's dedicated Dealer Specialist team, made abundant new contacts and impressed all who met them as well. They joined NTPDA to actively seek new opportunities to work with its' members. Feel free to reach them at their direct wholesale line, 800-STP-PARTS.

Steiner Tractor Parts stands out in an industry where most players are focused on sourcing the least expensive part regardless of quality. Steiner promises to deliver quality products at competitive prices that satisfy the needs of the most critical customers.

A lot has changed since this family company grew out of the salvage business. Its founder, Dave Steiner retired in

Just so you know . . .

As many of you know, I am a new grandmother. My daughter had a bachelorette party in Austin the weekend of February 10th and didn't want to leave her 3 month old. I volunteered to go along so my daughter could be near her baby. The bridal party had an Air B&B booked not far from downtown Austin so I tried to find a hotel close for a good price. I quickly learned hotels in downtown Austin are expensive! Most I found were well over \$200 a night. I got on the NTPDA Travel Discount Program to see what offers I could find there. To my surprise, I found the Omni Downtown Hotel for a 55% discount and paid \$113 per night plus tax. What a deal! We were 2 blocks from 6th Street. The service was superb. It was evident everyone we encountered wanted to make sure our experience was excellent. The next time you are looking for a hotel or car rental deal, don't forget to check out the NTPDA Travel Discount Program. You just might find the best deal ever!

--Kim Carroll

2003, but he still works in salvage under the moniker Grand Blanc Tractor Parts. And his children, Dan and Jenny, continue to transform the company leveraging modern technology. Their process starts with utilizing 3D software to create blueprints. Then the part is modeled with a 3D printer which allows engineering to fit the part to a tractor to make sure the drawing is correct.

Steiner further separates itself by housing a collection of tractors on site in a 12,000 square foot pole barn in order to check parts for fit and function. If they receive a complaint they pull their stock and check it for fit.

Focused on customer satisfaction Steiner promotes a corporate culture that focuses on our philosophy "success begins and ends with customer satisfaction." They offer a one year warranty against manufacturer defect and customers can leave feedback about their experience online using their customer review feature. Steiner wants its customers to feel that not only have they selected the right parts, but more importantly they have selected the right company.

NOTE: If you are an NTPDA member company and would like to be featured in an upcoming edition of the NTPDA Newsletter, contact Steven P. Haas at 612-296-1806 or online at shaas@dls-ww.com. Profiles are selected on a quarterly basis and will be featured in upcoming editions of the NTPDA newsletter.

Steven P. Haas is a board certified marketing consultant and a seasoned sales professional and an Association Accounts Representative for DLS Worldwide. He administers the NTPDA freight program and has negotiated special freight rates and carrier concessions for NTPDA members. He can be reached at 612-296-1806 or online at:

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Keeping'em running

Southeast Tractor Parts rolls along

BY JOHN CLAYTON

A fter mining the Sandhills of South Carolina for gold, Eric Benton struck his personal mother lode more than two decades ago when he and his wife, Linda, founded Southeast Tractor Parts in Jefferson.

It all began, however, while he still worked for Brewer Gold. On the side, the seasoned mechanic started his own tractor repair operation in 1987, and that sparked an interest in growing his own business.

"I decided to come home and work for myself," Benton recalls. "That was approximately 1994. I bought a couple of tractors and started tearing them down and selling the parts off of them."

Benton had the tools and the skills to work on pretty much anything. He possessed, in particular, a solid mechanical knowledge of John Deere and International Harvester tractors. Southeast, however, sells used, remanufactured and new parts for a long list of makes, including Massey Ferguson, Ford, Allis Chalmers, Case, Oliver, Deutz, Minneapolis-Moline, David Brown, John Deere, Kubota and International Harvester.

Although Southeast Tractor Parts has grown over the past 23 years, it has remained a family business. "We're pretty small, but it seems to be the right size and number of people for what we're doing," he says.

Southeast Tractor Parts' management, staff and crew totals three people: the couple and Dale Hawksworth, Benton's cousin, a former truck driver who does a bit of everything at Southeast.

"I hired him for a week while I was at a tractor show," Benton says with a laugh. "That was four years ago, and he's still here."

LIFE OF AN OWNER

Benton says business ownership has had its ups and downs, but it's been fulfilling. "You've got to have enough gumption to get up and go to work every morning," he



says. "It takes a certain amount of drive and dedication, but you know at the end of the week whether or not you're going to get a paycheck. Nobody is going to give you a paycheck."

While Benton has always been comfortable with grease and diesel, his wife has also found her niche in the business with the categorizing and online sales of the parts. For example, her email address is partslady@shtc.net.

"There's likely some tractors that she knows better than I do," Benton says.

"When I worked in the salvage yards and did nothing but tear tractors down, she did a lot of labeling the parts and getting them back down here and putting them on a shelf."

About 2 1/2 years ago, Southeast Tractor Parts got back to its roots by reopening the tractor repair side of the business. Benton and Hawksworth are the ones turning the wrenches.

"Up until then, we really didn't have the time or the people," Benton says. "But some of the people who had been working on tractors around here either retired or passed away, so there was a need."

"I'm not going to lay claim to being the best mechanic out there, but we've figured out a lot of problems and corrected them. I know we've had two tractors in that other people couldn't fix, and we fixed them — it took a month and a half for one of them, but we fixed it, and it's running today."

Southeast Tractor Parts prides itself on customer service, and, due to Benton's expertise, can offer technical assistance to go with the parts that are purchased. Southeast is a member of the National Tractor Parts Dealer Association.

TRACTORS ONLINE

The addition of the repair service is only one relatively new facet of the operation, which has grown with online ordering and an eBay store.

Benton says about 15 percent of the total sales at Southeast are now internet-based. Southeast has its own store linked through its website, setractorparts.com, in addition to an eBay store at stores.ebay.com/ Southeast-Tractor-Parts.

Benton says the growing internet business is under his wife's purview. "She's very knowledgeable about what's happening on that end," Benton says. "I know very little about it, but she catalogs it, photographs it and gets it on the internet and our eBay store."

Benton says people have come from all across the region, driving as far as 600 miles from places such as Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Maryland for parts, but the internet has opened Southeast Tractor Parts up to a much broader audience.

"Now, we ship parts all across the United States," Benton says. "We've shipped parts to Austria because they found us on the internet. We had a part they were needing, and they couldn't find one in Europe anywhere."

That part? A connecting rod for a Fordson Super Major, a British-made machine built in Dagenham, England, from 1951-64. Ford repackaged it as the Ford 5000 here, but the tractor remains a rarity in the U.S.

Southeast is also a member of Allied Information Networks, which allows the company to locate and acquire parts from other dealers across the U.S. and Canada.

As the business has grown and changed, so have the duties of its owners. As of now, Benton's title from day to day can be bookkeeper, salesman, mechanic or tractor buyer — or sometimes all of the above.

"We really don't have a staff to fall back on, so I end up doing it myself," Benton says. "Linda has the things she does, so she handles her end, and I handle my end. We have things we work on together. We just make it work."



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The s of Employee Retention

by Mel Kleiman

he "War for Talent" is heating up and employers nationwide are going to extraordinary measures to keep good people from jumping ship. Perks like being able to bring your pet to work, concierge services, and at-work massage therapy are just a few of the wilder enticements being offered. But let's get real...

You really don't have to go to these lengths. You just have to do a good job on the fundamentals. Take a look at the following ideas and add a few to your employee retention strategy. (You do have a retention strategy, don't you?)

Accountability –Make managers and supervisors accountable for employee turnover and watch retention improve.

Benefits – Try to stay at least even with the competition – especially on medical and retirement. If you really want to get ahead of the pack, look into stock options, profit sharing, or a bonus program based on the achievement of goals.

Communications – It's a two way street. Too often management only sends messages to employees. Good people will stay longer when there are simple and systematic ways for employees to talk to management as well.

Dignity – Treat everyone with consideration, kindness, and respect. These are the hallmarks of all great business leaders and great leaders inspire great loyalty.

Employee Selection – The best way to improve employee retention is to hire right in the first place. Use an employee selection system that matches people to the corporate culture, the manager, and the job. Test for the attitudes it takes to be successful on the job (dependability, honesty, initiative, etc.). Don't hire anyone that doesn't meet your standards.

Fun – Sure, business is serious, but there's no reason it can't be fun too. Once people start thinking yours is a fun place to work, almost nothing will be able to tempt your people to leave. The bonus is, once word gets out, you'll have applicants lined up around the block.

Growth – Some people are happiest with the exact same job year after year, but some aren't. Make sure your high achievers have something to shoot for.

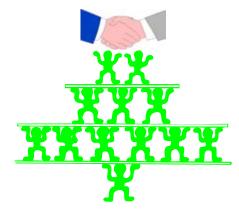
Hire Tough – The best people want to work for organizations that take hiring seriously. They're ready to give heart and soul to the right employer and quickly rule out companies that are just looking for another warm body.

Interview – Ask about the person's major achievements as well as their favorite and least favorite jobs, duties, and responsibilities. Were they anything like the position you're trying to fill?

Job – Continuously cross-train employees. Not only does this make work more interesting, but employees gain an appreciation for their co-workers' responsibilities and get a better sense of the organization's big picture.

Knowledge – Share it freely. No one likes operating in the dark. If you're not keeping your people in the know, they're spending your time and money speculating about what's going on and why. (That's just one good reason to make the time to keep them informed. Another is because it will improve productivity, quality, and, ultimately, profits.)

Lighten Up – Like the Dali Lama says: "If there's a solution, there's nothing to worry about. If there's not a solution,



there's nothing to worry about." You set the tone for the corporate culture. Would you want to work for you?

Manage – Manage people the way they want to be managed, not the way that's easiest for you. Some people want lots of support and encouragement and some want free reign. Adapt your style to theirs. They'll be happy and you'll get improved productivity.

Never – Never take anyone for granted. Most people don't stick around long where they're not appreciated. And you can be certain the people who stay on board anyway resent being treated so shabbily. As a result, these folks only do the minimum required to hang onto the job. This does not bode well for your business.

Orientation – First impressions are lasting. No employee is ever more enthusiastic or motivated than during the first



few days in a new job. Don't waste this time on boring employment forms or training classes. Use this time to make new hires feel welcome and valued. Help them understand where they fit in the big picture and what's in it for them besides a paycheck. A first-rate orientation is the best way to keep employees hanging in there over the inevitable rough spots that crop up over time on every job.

Praise – Loudly and often. Catch them doing something right and talk about it. Then watch everyone else try to live up to the standard set by the person being praised.

Quality – Never settle for any less than their best – the really good ones will appreciate it and the turkeys will look for a less demanding work environment.

Referrals – New employees referred by existing employees stay on the job three-to-five times longer than employees from any other source. Start an Employee Referral Bonus Program today.

Set Expectations – People will live up to them, so set them early and set them high. People feel valued when you expect a lot from them.

Training – Employees don't quit companies, they quit managers. Give your managers a fighting chance by training and retraining them in recruiting, selection, management, team building and motivation skills.

Understanding – Everyone's clamoring for more work/ life balance. Be understanding of the need to accommodate family or personal matters. It goes a long way toward building loyalty.

Values – Make sure it's Employees 1st, Customers 2nd. Your people should always be your most #1 priority – then they'll take care of your customers.

Watch What Happens – Whatever we pay positive attention to improves. Pay attention to retention.

X-out the Unsuitable – The No. 1 reason you lose good folks is because they get fed up with working for or with less than satisfactory people. Use a rigorous employee selection system to screen out those who are not a good fit.

Yield – To the wisdom of your employees. Ask questions and listen to their answers – they know your customers best. Never stop improving things.

Zero-In On – Every way possible to improve employee retention. There is a direct correlation between employee retention, customer loyalty, company profits, and returns to shareholders. Need any more incentive?

Certified Speaking Professional Mel Kleiman is an internationally recognized consultant, author and speaker/trainer on strategies for finding and keeping the best hourly employees. He is the president of Humetrics, a leading developer of systems, training processes, and tools for recruiting, selecting and retaining the best hourly workforce. Kleiman is the author of five books, including the best-selling "Hire Tough, Manage Easy." For more information, visit www.kleimanhr.com or call (713) 771-4401.

The Top 5 Reasons Hourly Employees Don't Quit

- **1. Clear expectations:** They know exactly what to do to meet the job's performance standards. No second-guessing or winging it.
- **2. Recognition:** Make it point to "catch them doing something right" and acknowledge all jobs well done.
- **3. Training:** Additional training and cross-training shows you trust your people and value them enough to invest further in them.
- **4. Mentoring:** When you give tenured employees the opportunity to help train and develop new hires it boosts their sense of pride in what they do and their importance to the organization.
- **5. Open, honest, two-way communications:** Specifically, make time for "stay conversations" at least quarterly. Ask questions and welcome their feedback at least weekly.

The post The Top 5 Reasons Hourly Employees Don't Quit appeared first on Humetrics.

--Mel Kleiman



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Create A Social Media Plan

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A social media strategy plan needn't be a novel. A single page, posted in a prominent place where you'll see it daily, will keep you on track. All you need to do is set aside a few minutes, and the commit to being consistent in follow-through.

9 Steps for Creating a Social Media Strategy

1. Identify your goals.

What are you needing to accomplish on social media? Do you need to increase website traffic by 30% over the next 60 days? Are you wanting to connect with one new industry influencer per week? Whatever your goals may be, write them down and ensure they are measurable.

2. Identify your target market.

Who do you want to connect with on social media? Be as specific as possible and include demographic, geographic, and even psychographic characteristics. Be sure to include job titles, if applicable.

3. CHOOSE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA.

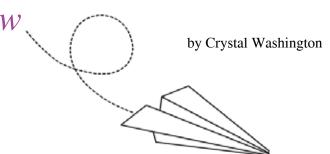
What social media is the best fit to help you achieve your goals, yet attracts your target market? If your target market consists mostly of middle-aged, male, C-level executives, Instagram will likely not be a good fit. If you want to connect with newly-engaged women in cities to get them to visit your wedding gown website, Pinterest or would make much more sense than LinkedIn.

4. LISTEN.

Prior to creating profiles or posting, observe your competitors, influencers and potential clients on your chosen social networks. What are they posting? What type of posts get the most traction? Are they using specific hashtags on Twitter or Instagram? Are they members of certain groups on LinkedIn.

5. Create a Persona.

Outline your posting personality. If you are creating this plan for an organization, take the time to write out a few words describing the personality of the brand. What would it look like if it were a person? Does the persona have a sense of humor? Is it a fan of pop-culture references? If you are creating a persona for yourself, pull those aspects of your personality that you will use in posting and decide which parts of your life remain separate. For instance, some people choose to not post about certain topics or their family.



6. Create your profiles.

This is a great time to use a graphic designer for customer Twitter backgrounds and Facebook headers. If you do not already have a designer, websites like guru.com, odesk.com, and elance.com have many capable contractors.

7. DECIDE ON A POSTING STRATEGY.

How often will you post on each social network and/or your blog? If you are part of an organization, who all has the ability to post? What types of items will you post on each network. How often will you check each social network to respond to conversations?

8. ANALYZE.

One you start using your posting strategy, analyze your results by reviewing your website analytics, tallying how often recruiters contact you, recording how many purchases you receive as a result of people redeeming promotion codes for social media. Compare your results against the goals you set in #1. Tweak your posting strategy or goals as needed.

9. AUTOMATE.

One you become comfortable with posting and have tweaked your strategy, use tools like HootSuite or Facebook Pages' scheduled posting feature to schedule posts for days in advance, then set the timers. You can still post in the moment, but this will ensure consistency.

Thank you so much for having me back at this year's conference! I'm glad we all made it through icepocolypse! There is no better group to kick off the year with. I'm looking forward to catching up!

Blessings,

Crystal Washington



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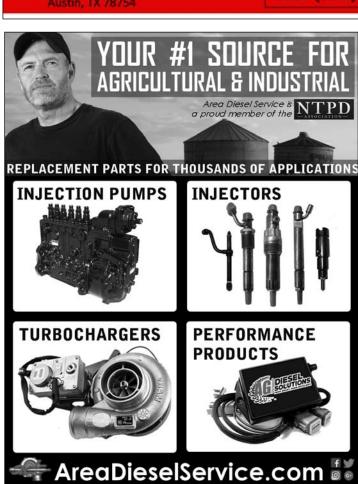
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by Richard Flint STEPHONE

There is no one department that is really more important than another; customer service is about people connecting in order to do the job of quality customer care.

Taking care of the customer is not someone's job; it is everyone's job! It is each person arriving every day and bringing an attitude that says, "I am glad to be here." It is about each person arriving and enjoying what they have chosen to do with their life. It is about each person realizing that what they do affects the customer's experience. It is not about coming to hang out to get a paycheck, but to be present with purpose. It is about each person committed to stepping up and bringing their very best to the environment.

What does it mean for people to "step up?"

First, it is about pride in what you are doing. Your attitude reflects your pride. When you are proud of who you are, where you are, and what you are doing, you approach each day with the commitment to be your best.

It is also about the enthusiasm you come to work with. I know some people would rather not have to work, but if that is not an option, they come each day with the enthusiasm that says, "I like what I am doing and I will show it with my behavior."

Stepping up is about opening yourself to new ways of doing things. Many people are trapped in their yesterday and want to fight to stay there. That can't happen if we are going to prepare for the future. Yesterday is a reference library, not something to hang on to. It is a room filled with lessons we can use to make today a better place.

Stepping up is about persistent consistency forged with consistent persistency. It is about you working for the good of all the people who make up the company. It is not about finding the short cuts; it is about each person raising the bar of quality, and together, sending a message to the customer that says, "You won't find anyone who cares for you more than we do!"

Stepping up is also about you looking for ways

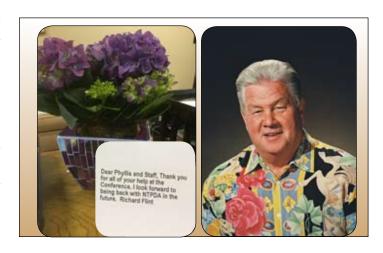
to improve. Being trapped in a world of routine sameness is not a fun place to live. When you are not growing, your value is diminishing. When you are not growing, you are stealing from those around you. When you aren't seeking to improve, you are being disrespectful to Leadership's efforts to make this a great place to work.

Last, but not least,

Stepping up means being an example! The new people will be trained by the example you bring. The question is simple, are you what you would want them to be? If you aren't, what do you need to do to be a positive example — a role model — for them?

The future is being defined by your behavior right now. It is not about waiting until tomorrow to start; it is about your commitment to step up. If you aren't committed to improving who you are, then you need to step away!

For more information contact: Richard Flint Seminars 1-800-368-8255 or (757) 873-7722 www.RichardFlint.com info@richardflint.com









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