

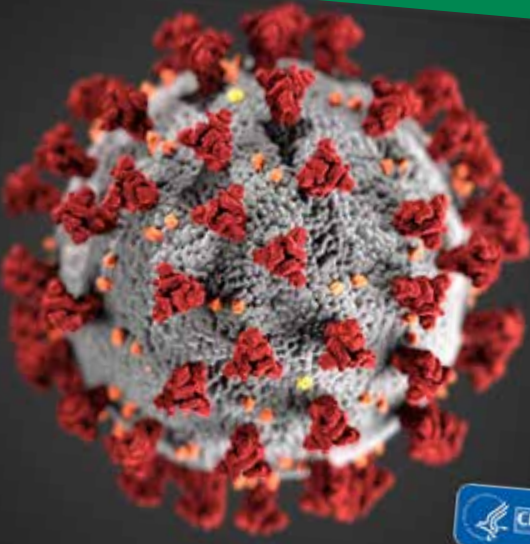


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ALL CHAPTER EVENTS CANCELED THROUGH MAY 31

• *See page 3*



**Coronavirus and the
Green Industry**

• **Stories on Pages 3, 4 & 7**

**94th Aero Squadron
Mixer photo coverage
on Page 9**

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COVID-19 FALLOUT

**SFV Beautification Awards
Program Canceled**

- **8-Week Suspension of All In-Person Meetings and Events**

Dear SFV CLCA Members,

Our biggest priority is the health and safety of our members. We need to do our part to help slow the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage everyone to minimize its spread and to contain the virus through social distancing and sanitary measures.

The San Fernando Valley Chapter will suspend in-person meetings and events for the next 8 weeks. Our Beautification Awards will be canceled for this year. The April meeting will be a telephone conference on Thursday, April 2, 2020. We will send the phone number and code when it is ready. The focus of the call will be to address how our chapter will change for this year. We will also talk about what measures our companies can take or are taking to get through this unique circumstance.

My thoughts and prayers to all who have been impacted. This crisis will pass and what we will remember is how we dealt with it. Use this as an opportunity to spend time with your family and work on projects you never had time to do. I for one will enjoy my vegetable garden with my daughters this year. We are grateful for all our members and we will do our best to keep you safe and informed.

Respectfully,

Luis Casas

President, CLCA San Fernando Chapter

STATE AND LOCAL EVENTS

Don't miss any of these very important events!

Subject to Change – Check with Chapter Office First

All events through May 31 are canceled.

- April 2 The Board is holding a teleconference meeting to determine the course of the remainder of the year
- Sept. 18 Channel Islands Chapter and friends Annual Fishing Trip, Channel Islands Sportsfishing, Oxnard, details TBA
- Nov. CLCA Convention, Hawaii, details TBA

Board Meetings are usually held the 1st or 2nd Thursday, 7:30 a.m. or 6:30 p.m., locations, days and times vary. Check with a Board Member first. Dinner Meetings are 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted.



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LUIS CASAS
SFV President
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Communication is Key...Especially Now

Opportunity knocks every time there is a crisis, such as dealing with the Coronavirus. The first step every business should take is to ensure there is a safe working environment for their employees. Any employee that may be sick needs to stay home to prevent spreading the disease. In the field, work is required for all Green Industry business.

Communication will be the key to keeping your business afloat during times like these.

Open dialogue with employees will be necessary to present vital information. The CDC, WHO and OSHA have all created informational material on the virus and its symptoms on prevention and treatment that can be helpful for employees. Many employees are worried about their jobs. It would be a good idea to sit down as a team and discuss what are some possible problems that may arise and how to deal with them.

Uncertainty may cause unnecessary anxiety. Leadership will be important to bring your team together. Once this scare has come and passed your team will be grateful as to how you handled this difficult situation.

Customers are the lifeline that support our businesses. Develop a system of communication that keeps your company on the forefront of their minds.

Customers are the lifeline that support our businesses. Develop a system of communication that keeps your company on the forefront of their minds. An email form that can be replicated by all the employees would be preferred. Set rules up as to how accounts are to be managed, so if there is ever a change in personnel, the process will look seamless. There should always be room for a personal touch, just keep it simple and fun.

In-person meetings may be substituted with phone call conferences and email chains. Take notes and follow up promptly when needed. If your team is not using software to organize your business, this should be the time to implement it.

Reach out to fellow CLCA members for help and ideas. We are all in this together. – Luis

New CDC Guidelines for Group Events

On March 15, we all received updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control recommending organizers cancel or postpone events of 50 or more people. In accordance with the CDC recommendation, CLCA has postponed the following in-person events:

MWEL Workshops

Pomona (March 26)

South Pasadena (April 28),

Calabasas (April 30)

Water Efficient Landscape Dual Certification Program (WELDCP) Course Series

Perris (April 14, 21, 28 and May 5)

Santa Ana (May 6, 13, 20 and 27)

New dates will be announced for these events once we can confirm with each event venue and our event sponsor, the Metropolitan Water District.

For updates and more advice regarding coronavirus and group events, please visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>

CLCA Office Operating Remotely

While working to provide continuity of service for members and the industry, we also wish to ensure the health and safety of our office staff. For the remainder of this week, the CLCA office staff will be working remotely. All staff have access to their company email and any phone messages will be delivered to them via email so they can continue to assist members.

CLCA recognizes that we are in a fluid and unique global situation. As conditions change, we will continue to monitor the need to continue or adjust these changes in partnership with those we serve.

If you have questions or need additional guidance, please reach out to Sandra at the CLCA office at (916) 830-2780 or sandragiarde@clca.org. Until we meet again, please stay healthy and wash your hands (again)!

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Contractors State License Board Sting in L.A. County Nets 11 Suspected Unlicensed Contractors

• *Sting suspect makes \$23,000 bid to undercover investigators*

Los Angeles County residents may think an expensive price tag on a home renovation project means they are getting quality workmanship. But that isn't always the case. A recent Contractors State License Board (CSLB) undercover sting caught 11 suspects contracting without a license, including someone who made a \$23,000 bid.

This high bid from the February 26-27, 2020 operation provided to undercover investigators was to stucco and paint the outside of a home and detached converted garage. That bid is well over the legal limit for contracting without a license. In California, it's illegal for an unlicensed person to bid for or perform any home improvement valued at \$500 or more in combined labor and material costs.

"Consumers need to protect themselves by hiring a licensed contractor, especially when taking on a project that costs tens of thousands of dollars," said CSLB Registrar David Fogt. "Just because someone is asking for a lot of money to do the work doesn't mean they have the skills, insurance, or know the trade well enough to get the job done right."

CSLB partnered with the Hawthorne City Attorney's Office and the California Department of Insurance to conduct the undercover operation. CSLB Statewide Investigative Fraud Team (SWIFT) members posed as owners of a three-bedroom home and invited alleged unlicensed contractors to place bids on renovation projects.

The 11 alleged unlicensed contractors gave bids for home improvement jobs, including painting, plumbing, and concrete

work. They will be referred to the Hawthorne District Attorney's Office for contracting without a license (Business and Professions Code (BPC) §7028). First-conviction penalties include up to six months in jail and/or up to \$5,000 in fines.

Before hiring a contractor, consumers should perform an "Instant License Check" on the CSLB website. This feature allows homeowners to search by license number, name, or business name to find individual contractor pages that show if the contractor's license is active and in good standing. The page also lists bond and workers' compensation insurance information. Workers' compensation insurance is required if the contractor has any employees.

The 11 individuals also could face a misdemeanor charge for illegal advertising. Unlicensed contractors must state in all ads that they do not have a license (BPC §7027.1). The penalty for violating the advertising rules for unlicensed contractors is a fine of \$700 to \$1,000.

When hiring a contractor, consumers should also remember:

- Watch your down payment. The legal limit for a down payment is 10 percent of the contract price or \$1,000, whichever is lower.
- You should always get three bids from licensed contractors before hiring anyone to perform home improvement work.
- Homeowners can use CSLB's "Find My Licensed Contractor" feature to build and download a list of qualified licensed contractors in their area.

10 Low-Cost Employee Perks that Pay *By Don Sadler*

The economic downturn brought about a different mindset among most employers when it comes to perks and employee benefits. Long gone, for the most part, are lavish perks such as big raises, bonuses, and onsite game and recreation rooms. Instead most companies are looking for ways to reward deserving employees without breaking the bank. Fortunately, when it comes to perks that pay, the possibilities are limited only by your creativity and imagination. Here are 10 ideas to consider:

1. **Warehouse club memberships:** Family memberships at warehouse stores such as Sam's Club or Costco cost just \$50 a year or so and are often considered an extremely valuable perk by employees because they help make their paychecks go farther.
2. **Movie tickets and restaurant coupons:** Keep a stash of these in your drawer and give them away spontaneously when you see employees doing an especially good job or going above and beyond the call of duty. Little, inexpensive gestures such as this provide a lot of bang for the buck.

3. **Afternoon socials:** Close your business for an afternoon every once in a while for a social and serve everyone ice cream, pizza, or sandwiches. You'll gain more in employee goodwill than you would in sales for one afternoon. As a twist, make the "price" of admission a new idea or suggestion for improving your business.
4. **Ballgame tickets:** These don't have to be major league tickets. Is there a minor league or community college team in your city or town? As an added perk, give away tickets for an afternoon (instead of evening) game so employees get to enjoy a game and an afternoon off.
5. **Company picnics:** While not new, this is a great perk that's easily neglected or forgotten. Add a twist by including a "beat the boss" competition, such as in horseshoes, hula-hoop, or volleyball, and giving away fun prizes to the winners. Company picnics don't have to just be once-a-year shindigs either. Schedule them spontaneously as often as you like.

Continued on Page 11



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Coronavirus and the Workplace – Compliance Issues for Employers

Submitted by CLCA Insurance Solutions

As the number of reported cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to rise, employers are increasingly confronted with the possibility of an outbreak in the workplace. Employers are obligated to maintain a safe and healthy work environment for their employees but are also subject to a number of legal requirements protecting workers. For example, employers must comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in their approach to dealing with COVID-19.

There are a number of steps that employers can take to address the impact of COVID-19 in the workplace. In addition to reviewing the compliance concerns outlined in this Compliance Bulletin, employers should:

- Closely monitor the CDC, WHO and state and local public health department websites for information on the status of the coronavirus.
- Proactively educate their employees on what is known about the virus, including its transmission and prevention.
- Establish a written communicable illness policy and response plan that covers communicable diseases readily transmitted in the workplace.

Consider measures that can help prevent the spread of illness, such as allowing employees flexible work options like working from home.

How is Coronavirus Spread?

The available information about how the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads is largely based on what is known about similar coronaviruses. COVID-19 is a new disease and there is more to learn about its transmission, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States.

According to the CDC, the virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about six feet) or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby, or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may also be possible for a person to contract COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with the virus and then touching his or her own mouth, nose, or eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic. Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms, and there have been reports of this occurring, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

Disease Prevention in the Workplace


Whenever a communicable disease outbreak is possible, employers may need to take precautions to keep the disease from spreading through the workplace. It is recommended that employers establish a written policy and response plan that covers communicable diseases readily transmitted in the workplace.

Employers can require employees to stay home from work if they have signs or symptoms of a communicable disease that poses a credible threat of transmission in the workplace, or if they have traveled to high-risk geographic areas, such as those with wide-spread or sustained community transmission of the illness. When possible, employers can consider allowing employees to work remotely. Employers may require employees to provide medical documentation that they can return to work.



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Stay cool.

Have a question about an HR matter?
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Get advice on the proper and legal way to handle employee concerns to make your business run smoothly!

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4 Steps to Kick-Start Your Online Business *By Dave Lavinsky, President, Guiding Metrics*

The internet offers everyone a virtually limitless platform to start or expand your business and earn profits. There are many tools that allow you to easily create a website, and tracking and analytical tools that make it easier to manage and monitor your business.

There are four key steps you should follow when starting an internet business, or expanding your current non-internet business:

1. Identify customer demand

With countless websites already offering nearly everything you can think of, it's critical that you determine if there's a demand for what you'd like to offer. There are several free tools that show keyword search volumes that are helpful. For example, if many people are searching for a particular term, and there are few websites that provide the answers or solutions customers are seeking, there could be a significant demand for your online business.

2. Create a business plan

Your business plan is a road map. It shows where you are now and where you want to go. Importantly, it maps out the journey, so you have the greatest likelihood of getting to the finish line.

Use the proper business plan layout that includes all the key sections: your executive summary, company analysis, industry analysis, customer analysis, competitor analysis, marketing plan, operations plan, management team, financial plan, and appendix. Within those sections, answer key questions such as, Will you create your website or outsource the development of it? What are your capital investments and operating expenses? What are your contingency plans? What is your break-even point?

A detailed SWOT analysis and the core content of your website should also be featured in your plan. Finally, your plan should highlight your business's unique selling point (USP) and explain how you will differentiate yourself from the competition.

3. Set up your website

Setting up your website starts with choosing the best domain name. Your domain name or URL should preferably be synonymous with your business name. If your website doesn't describe your business type (e.g., joescarwash.com), be sure your plan calls for extra investments in marketing to build your brand name.

You then need to decide whether you will build your website yourself or outsource it. There are countless skilled website creators who can build general websites as well as specific applications and features. Depending upon the complexity of your site, you might need a specific hosting company to handle your processing needs.

Every component of your website matters. Look and feel, content, user friendliness, and comprehensiveness are just some factors that can make a website successful and build your brand reputation. Importantly, avoid common website design mistakes that are found on many sites. And make

sure your site provides users with a great experience on desktop, tablet, and mobile devices.

4. Market your online business

The most effective methods to marketing your online business include search engine optimization (getting your site to rank near the top of the search engine results); search engine marketing (advertising on search engines); social media marketing (posting on social media platforms); and email marketing—all are proven and effective strategies.

But just because they are proven strategies, there's a big difference between doing them and doing them well. Be sure to study best practices before embarking on any of these marketing strategies. And then be sure to judge the results of each of your marketing efforts so you can optimize them to best attract your target customers.

Every component of your website matters. Look and feel, content, user friendliness, and comprehensiveness are just some factors that can make a website successful and build your brand reputation. Importantly, avoid common website design mistakes that are found on many sites.



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94th Aero Squadron Hosts SFV Happy Hour Mixer



VINTAGE BIPLANE at the entrance of 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant in Van Nuys welcomes SFV Members and friends to the Chapter Happy Hour and Mixer March 5.



UP, UP & AWAY – The Happy Hour and Mixer was held in the patio alongside the Van Nuys Airport runways, where corporate jets, helicopters and small planes took off and landed within yards of our group.



UNIQUE SETTING for a unique event, the Mixer brought together contractors, suppliers and several new faces to network between the occasional roar of jet engines. No one complained. It was awesome.



POOL CORP had several attendees, including Natalia Guzman, Gerry Mercado, Laura Lopez, and Omar Plascencia. Fourth from left is Ryan Yamini of Corona Lighting.



LIGHTCRAFT OUTDOORS rep Bruce Dennis, shown with SFV President Luis Casas, is helping several chapters with membership, and will help SFV as well.



CATCHING UP on the latest Green Industry news at the SFV Happy Hour Mixer are Mickey Strauss, Gordon Larson, Nelson Colvin and Charles Nunley.



SFV VP MEMBERSHIP Jennifer Nelson enjoys picking up some membership ideas from Norm Lopez and Gordon Larson. Jennifer was one of the key people that brought this fun event together.



PRESIDENT LUIS CASAS and Treasurer Josh Emeterio take a Kodak moment at the 94th Aero Squadron Mixer March 5 in Van Nuys.



2ND LIEUTENANT CHUCK CARR is the driver for General Luis Casas. He is waiting for General Casas while he meets with General George Patton. There are several wartime vehicles on the property.



MEDICAL PANEL TRUCK would be recommissioned if we had an accident among our group. Thankfully, the only accident that occurred was running a little short on the appetizers.



GREEN INDUSTRY VIPS Gordon Larson, Norm Lopez and Oliver Holt enjoy mixing it up at the SFV Mixer.



RUMOR HAS IT that this old truck is used daily by a non-CLCA landscaper.



JONATHAN GOLDHILL
CEO

The Goldhill Group

Conflicts that Plague Family Businesses

From an article by Jonathan Goldhill, The Goldhill Group

A 1971 article by Harry Levinson, clinical professor of psychology emeritus in the Department of Psychiatry of Harvard Medical School, focused not only on common family business conflict scenarios but on the psychology behind these conflicts. The insights contained in this article are just as valid today as they ever have been.

The truth is, despite technological advances and the ever-changing dynamics of the social world, we are still human. Our physiology hasn't changed, nor has the general framework of the family unit itself. Of course, not all families have the types of conflicts we're going to talk about, but those that do face an uphill climb – at least, if succession is the goal.

Why Have a Family Business?

Family businesses come with many benefits. Hypothetically, when you're all working toward a common goal, you'll work harder. When kids grow up in the family business, the learning curve is much shorter. Trust is not guaranteed, but it's certainly easier to

navigate known challenges. There are certain tax advantages too, but ultimately, you're providing a legacy for generations to come, and that's usually an overarching goal.

Everybody has a stake in the company, so if the vision is shared, then all should be well.

Of course, as with anything, you have to consider the cons.

Family Rivalry – Even Without the Family

All families deal with some rivalry. When we're talking about the family business, that tendency originates with the company's founder. Unresolved conflicts with a parent, difficulties accepting supervision, or dealing with authority – according to Levinson, these are often the reasons for starting one's own business. It is a very personal mission, one that goes beyond what you can accomplish and borders on an "I'll show you" dynamic.

Since the objective for starting the business is autonomy, anybody who appears to be a threat, whether it's a family member or hired employees, could quickly find themselves on the outside looking in.

Continued on Page 11

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Family Business, continued from Page 10

In the effort to scale up, one of the first things that we talk about is the need to establish strong second-tier management. Sometimes, when the skill sets aren't extant within the organization, we advocate bringing in subject matter experts to train and educate.

Illustrative of this scenario, Levinson talks about a situation in which the founder lures talented young workers with promises of exciting promotions and then sabotages their efforts by withholding organizational support for their assignments. He does not allow them to make their own decisions from day-to-day, but he does provide them with incredible benefits. The result is that the employees are, on the one hand, very angry with their working circumstances, but on the other hand, they feel guilty for feeling that way. After all, he is a kind and generous person.

Father-Son Rivalry

While these employees are not family, per se, they are being treated to paternal behavior, reward and punishment. As a result, the founder is ensuring he will never have a rival. If we are to overcome this rivalry, we have to look at the root cause – in this case, the unresolved parental/authority conflict – and deal with that so that the business can move forward.

Of course, there are many more types of rivalries, but the father-son dynamic is significant.

Here are some examples of father-son rivalry and how it can negatively impact the family business:

The father has a problem delegating authority and will not retire, despite stated intentions to do so. He wants to pass the company to his kids but feels that if he lets go, he loses a part of himself. Because of this, he continues to assert himself, creating feelings of rivalry in his children.

Broken promises, lack of autonomy, and constant intrusions lead to frustration, anger, and the king of all conflict – resentment. There is resentment around being kept in a subordinate role, despite having the right qualifications.

Depending on your father for your income, title, promotions, and everything else is never desirable in adulthood. It spurs feelings of inadequacy, hostility, and guilt for feeling that way. The authority figure, on the other hand, whether it's the father, mother, or older sibling, sees the younger family member as ungrateful and unappreciative.

In conclusion, secession in the family business is rarely easy. But, understanding the dynamics that prevent it from moving forward successfully helps to drive the process forward.

Reach out today to learn more about what conflicts are preventing your family business from reaching its goals.

About the Author

Jonathan Goldhill is a business coach, business owner, strategic sales and marketing specialist, father and husband. He has grown several companies from nothing into multimillion dollar businesses and has been helping entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized businesses ever since. He can be reached at <https://www.thegoldhillgroup.com>

Employee Perks, continued from Page 5

6. Flex time: This really is a no-cost benefit that most employees will perceive to be extremely beneficial. If there's no specific reason why all employees need to be at work from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., for example, then let them create their own work schedules (within reason). This can help build tremendous loyalty by showing employees that you care about their families and other obligations outside the workplace.

7. Telecommuting: Like flex time, this perk doesn't have to cost you a dime. If employees can do their jobs from home just as well as they can from your office, give them this opportunity, even if just for one or two days a week. This is an especially valuable perk for employees with long commutes or hectic family schedules.

8. Sponsorships: Sponsor the little league baseball or youth soccer or football teams that your employees' children participate in. This helps the teams, of course, and provides good exposure and visibility for your business.

9. Memberships in professional or trade associations: Many employees want to get involved in industry trade associations to meet their peers and broaden their professional horizons. Your company will benefit too, of course, from the knowledge they'll gain and put to work in your business.

10. Continuing professional education: Many employees welcome the opportunity to enhance their professional skills through classes, seminars, and workshops. Many local community colleges and professional associations offer courses and conferences at a very reasonable cost.

Don Sadler is a freelance commercial writer focusing in the areas of business and finance. Reach him at don@donsadlerwriter.com or visit www.donsadlerwriter.com.

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Resolving Conflict in the Workplace: What to Do When Tempers Flare

By Jon Forknell, Vice President and General Manager of Atlas Business Solutions

Bickering in the workplace is toxic. Anyone who is forced to listen to complaints and gripes is immediately put in the center of the conflict. This can spread like a cancer in your office and cause employees to become disgruntled and unhappy with their jobs. Stopping disagreements as soon as they arise is essential to the overall health of your business.

If you see a conflict brewing, here is a six-step process to finding a resolution that'll satisfy both parties:

1. Talk to each person individually

To understand the conflict, you must first have an individual discussion with each team member. Chances are the discussion will look like a finger-pointing episode. Although this "he said, she said" conversation isn't productive on the surface, it can help you uncover the deeper issues at stake. Ask each person for their individual take on the problem. Listen carefully to their stories, while remaining neutral.

2. Nail down trigger-pulling behaviors

While you're reflecting on the two stories, focus on areas that ignite a fight between the employees. This will help you find the trigger point when frustration escalates in your team. For example, if the conflict flares up every time one employee takes a long lunch break (even if it's allowed by you, the manager), you'll know that you'll have to come to an agreement and make a compromise with your schedule.

3. Home in on points of agreement

There's a middle ground in every conflict. The trick (and the toughest part) is finding that middle ground where two parties can agree; it's here that you'll find peace. Using the same lunch example, the agreement overlap might be that long lunches are acceptable when the other person is taking a customer out to eat, or if the notoriously late employee lets the office know he'll be out for a long lunch.

4. Create a plan for resolution

Once you have the trigger point and the agreement overlap in mind, it's time to craft a resolution plan. In your resolution plan, it's important to give your employees as much control over the situation as possible. This may seem difficult for many managers, especially as you're trying to coax the two employees into working well together, but it's an important step.

Continuing with the long lunch example, the resolution for this situation might be to give your team access to making adjustments on their own with the schedule. This way, if an employee knows he'll need a long lunch, he can schedule it in, notifying the entire office and avoiding conflict.

5. Enact your plan

You have a plan! Now it's time to set the new wheels in motion. Sit the two employees down together and explain why you chose this method of resolution. Make it a point to show that you listened to both of their concerns by addressing each person's trigger points and acknowledging the agreement overlap. Then get both parties to agree to the plan. Once they've agreed to the plan, they've made a verbal commitment that it will work as a resolution.

6. Tweak as needed

Sometimes, your team members need to see and feel the plan in action before they know where changes need to be made. When resolving conflict, it's a good idea to revisit the issue a few weeks after enacting your resolution plan. This way, you can make any necessary tweaks and keep both parties happy and engaged in moving forward following the conflict.

Conflict resolution is a work in progress

Resolving conflicts in the workplace is a job that's never finished. By listening carefully to each person's concerns and using what you learn to put new procedures in place, you'll have a better chance of overcoming conflict and moving forward.

Wowie! CLCA is Going to Maui November 11-14

Although talk about CLCA's Annual Convention usually focuses on the Trophy Awards, high-quality education and numerous opportunities to connect with friends and future friends, Maui brings its own special excitement.

Some folks will enjoy the Maui High Performance Computing Center at the Air Force Maui Optical and Supercomputing observatory, while others will curve around mountains and pass spectacular waterfalls and black sand beaches while cruising the Hana Highway.

Some will visit Haleakala National Park and its dormant volcano. Others will be enchanted by spectacular sunset cruises or whale-watching journeys that depart from the nearby port of Lahaina, home to numerous shops and restaurants.

Whatever your preference, CLCA's 2020 Annual Convention in Maui is shaping up to be a can't miss opportunity. Plan now to attend!

Spring: A Good Time to Assess Your Direction

Every month is special for me, I guess. March and Daylight Savings Time begins...YEAH! Spring begins ushering in profound blooming of blooms and new growth. Taking a cue from Nature, this is a good time to assess the direction we are going in and the commitment we have in our chosen direction.

I have found that the choices we make are not always fixed but may change and move on the learning curve of life, as Nature continues to send our way new and interesting things to observe and enjoy while on our journey. It is a pleasure taking part in the quality and fabric of life around us as we become more aware of this newness within every day. There is an eternal, creative principle that constantly creates anew around us – it is by means of us, through us...it is us.

Being in a vocation with a creative medium as we designers and landscape contractors are, we find a dynamic ever-presence of creative expression just waiting for picturing by means of us individually. The beautiful works we share with clients, friends, and community have an intrinsic reward for all, I have found. Each project displays

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the brilliance and creativity of design, the wisdom, professionalism, harmony, and flow to be admired and enjoyed by all. I reflect back on the beautification awards program and am reminded of

the designers' ideas and the teams that brought these projects to fruition. It's like walking hand-in-hand with our Creator as an extension of His creating by means of us. This is true whether the prize is given for producing an award-winning project or maintaining its beauty.


What is produced follows our intention or mental equivalent. What you firmly and passionately believe in becomes your reality.

As earth is like a circle – with no beginning and no end; the first and the last; the alpha and omega – so, God, our Creator, can only manifest our desires by means of us... without judgement. – *Dave*.




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