

SouthWestern Flash

August 2011, Vol.9, No. 8



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- New Training Program
- Increasing Leadership Skills
- News from IronSearch®
- Farm Payment Database Released
- Education Corner
- ...and more

Upcoming Events

Dealers of Tomorrow

Oct. 18-19 - Austin, Texas

Western Farm Show

Feb. 24-26, 2012
American Royal Complex
Kansas City, Missouri



South Western Association

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www.swassn.com/register-email.htm

Linda Talley to Speak in Austin

Early-Bird Deadline: September 23

The 2011 Dealers of Tomorrow workshop is scheduled in Austin, Texas, on October 18-19. Topics will range from communications and customer service to leadership skills. The program will feature three speakers on three different topics at each location.

New Speaker, New Program

The Austin workshop will feature a new speaker with a different program. Linda Talley is a Houston-based business coach, speaker and author of *Business Finesse: Dealing With Sticky Situations in the Workplace for Managers* and *The Daily Win – Building Success One Step at a Time*.

Linda's topic for the workshop will be: *How Leaders Communicate Change to Positively Impact the Bottom Line*. "As a leader, you think that people follow you because of what you say, and you would be right. However, what people really follow is your body language because you are influencing people around you – even when you are saying nothing at all. Actions speak louder than words. Whether you are an executive, business owner, a manager or staff person, there are times when you must be able to establish your leadership skills and lead. Make sure you know how to do that effectively. Learn key actions that leaders do to mis-communicate and the 'fixes' they can make in order to be a congruent leader."

Other Speakers at the Austin Workshop Include:

Sabrina Sebastian - Social Media. How to get involved with Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr and blogging. You've heard of social media - maybe even used a little of it – but how can you implement it to improve sales and marketing? This training is designed to help today's equipment dealer get involved with social media, specifically in the Ag industry. Discussion will include basic training tools and best practices required for various social media sites.

Pat McGaughey - "The Customer Comes Last! (If You Want the Customer to Feel Like #1)." If you want your customers to "Feel Like #1" then get ready for a totally opposite approach toward customer service training. While it may sound like a gimmick, this conference session has impacted thousands of customer service programs across North America. The first thing you will learn in this session is "The Customer Comes Last!" if you want them to feel like #1. This unique training will give every participant a new perspective toward customer service. Employee

Continued on next page

FIVE REASONS TO ATTEND DEALERS OF TOMORROW


- Dealers of Tomorrow is an established event that offers a rewarding opportunity to meet and visit with other dealers.
- The seminars are planned by dealers for dealers without regard to product or manufacturer affiliations.
- Meals and breaks give you a chance to make connections that you can continue long after the conference ends.
- Time away from your business is a great opportunity to gain a new perspective and re-energize.
- Interact with content leaders and learn new ways to manage better.

indifference or simply slow or rude behavior isn't the problem; it's the outcome of the problem. This session focuses on the root of the problem and then the solutions.

This workshop is for owners, mid-level managers, department managers, and key dealership personnel. Consider bringing several staff members so they can share ideas and return to implement them at your dealership. While the Dealers of Tomorrow programs are planned by younger dealers, the programs are designed for everyone – no matter your age, line of equipment or management position.

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More information about the Dealers of Tomorrow Workshops is available on the SouthWestern Association website: www.swassn.com or by calling the Association offices at: 

SouthWestern Endorses New Training Program

Program Offers Free Mystery Shopping to Members

The SouthWestern Association board of directors has approved a partnership with Creative Sales Solutions (CSS) to provide sales training to dealers.

The new SouthWestern Mystery Shopping and Training Program will be administered by CSS. The Florida-based company will work with participating SouthWestern Association members to provide sales training for parts and service personnel.

The program involves mystery-shopping calls to dealerships. These calls evaluate how parts and service employees interact with customers.

"We developed the program to help employees improve their skills to build stronger and more profitable relationships with customers," says Jim Facente, CSS president. "We've mystery shopped more than 1,000 parts and service employees throughout North America and we've trained these employees to use sound techniques to achieve greater success."

Doug Neufeld, CEO, Prairieland Partners, Hutchinson, Kan., and immediate past president of the SouthWestern board, was among a group of board

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Managers Become Leaders When....

By Linda Talley, President of Linda Talley & Associates, Inc. and Dealers of Tomorrow Speaker

They have a vision of what's possible for themselves, for their organization, for the world. A vision doesn't happen overnight. Yes, it will come to you but usually not in your time frame. Leaders are willing to wait for the vision to come to them. By aggressively pursuing it, you push it farther away from you. For the rest of this year and into next year, take time to let your vision of what's possible come to you. Do this by taking long walks by yourself, reading inspirational books or articles, meditating, journaling, daydreaming and napping. These activities are what will create the space for your vision to come to you. Remember the words of Aldous Huxley: "The more one pursues or tries to control something, the more it eludes them." A vision is just like a butterfly. Ever try to catch one? It won't happen easily but if you sit still, one may just land on your shoulder.

They create a congruent environment. This is not as easy as it sounds because the environment begins with you! If you are not congruent, neither will the surrounding environment. You become congruent when what you think, what you say and what you do are the same—congruent. Usually actions are different than what was said or thought. Leaders don't fall into this trap. They truly walk the talk. When you create congruence around you, you create a safe environment and this is how people learn best. Leaders make it safe to learn and by doing so they help their people get their need for security met and they help themselves achieve self-actualization.

They start asking questions rather than solving problems. Managers must solve problems; it's part of their job. It's not the job of a leader. A leader can certainly solve the problem but s/he knows that by doing so, they put a power trip on their people that keeps them small. When a leader asks questions, they are actively seeking information from their front line workers, people I call knowledge workers, and use that information to create something much bigger—not only for the organization but also for the people. A real leader does not solve problems that belong to someone further down the line.



Linda Talley

They create direction for people by asking them to follow. People are just waiting for someone to ask them to follow them. It might as well be you! If not you, then whom? That answer could be pretty scary! Leaders have a vision, they know where they want to go and they ask people to follow them. By doing so, it gives their people a direction. Then it's up to that individual to choose to follow or not. When the person does choose to follow, you have created a bond that will last for a long time. Why? Because people want to follow! They want real leaders! They want someone to lead the way. They want you!

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They create an innovative organization, beginning with them. What steps are you taking daily to make yourself an innovative machine? Are you driving to work a different way every day? Are you letting people cut in front of you in the grocery? Are you renting a different type of video or buying a different type of CD? Are you reading what the “kids” are reading? Watching what they’re watching? If you’re not doing things differently, you’re probably not innovating! When you’re innovating, you stop identifying the wrong problem, stop judging ideas too quickly, stop stopping with the first good idea, move away from turf issues, and begin to create passion in your organization. When times are tough, it makes sense to cut spending, look at critical procedures and it makes even more sense to work harder at innovation. Because the leaders that continue to innovate will win. The ones that forget that innovation is what created them and then drove them in the first place will die.


They listen more than they talk. We all love to talk, myself included! You’ve probably heard me! However, the leader listens a lot more than s/he talks. When they do this, they hear a lot more that helps them to re-think their strategies and reposition themselves and the organization for the future. Years ago, when the government was suing Bill Gates, did he sit around talking about what he/Microsoft was going to do? No, he started listening to what was happening in the industry and decided to take a bite out of the gaming industry with the X-Box. If he hadn’t been listening, he would not have been able to take his company to the next level.

They create quiet time for themselves and make it a priority. You must create the space for new ideas to come to you. A quiet time, a quiet place works best for me. In fact, after taking a nap, I come up with my best ideas. If your workday is so hectic as to not allow you this quiet time, book it in after work hours. You won’t regret it because you and your body need it! Leaders take care of themselves in this way so they can then create the future they really want.

They change the principles of an organization rather than trying to change actions. When a leader changes him/herself, the organization will have to change. It’s a law of nature called cause and effect. A manager changes people’s actions, a leader first changes his or her principles and the rest follow. You may say, “Doesn’t that sound like the Pied Piper?” Only if the “leader” is Jim Jones or David Koresh. When leaders take a stand for the principles of leadership, they are essentially training the next generation of leaders.

They honor and respect every member within their organization regardless of any issues. It’s called being a big person. Leaders don’t carry grudges; they forgive easily and move on to build a bigger and better relationship. They look beyond the “look” or the dress or the actions of the individual to see his/her soul. It’s a much bigger and broader picture.

They focus on what they want rather than what they don’t want. My mother always told me to be careful of what I thought about because that’s what I would get and she was right. When I think the worse will happen, it usually does. When I think the best will happen, it usually does. Leaders know this secret and always stay focused on what they really want and keep the distractions out of their mind. Think of as many things as you want, just make sure it’s what you really want! Leaders do!

Linda Talley is a Houston-based business coach, speaker and author of *Business Finesse: Dealing With Sticky Situations in the Workplace for Managers* and *The Daily Win—Building Success One Step at a Time*. 

New SouthWestern Member Program - cont.

members who evaluated the program. "I believe the program could help change some basic behaviors of the frontline people in a dealership's parts and service departments," says Neufeld. "The main reason I believe it will have success is because it will bring awareness to employees in how they present themselves and their dealerships to the people they speak with on the phone."


As part of the agreement between SouthWestern and CSS, a special offer is extended to all members of the association.

"CSS has agreed to mystery shop up to three employees for each association member at no charge," says Jeff Flora, CEO, SouthWestern Association. "This offer will give SouthWestern members the opportunity to learn free of charge how some of their parts and service people score when compared to the successful employees mystery shopped and trained by CSS."

Flora says the CSS agreement also calls for special pricing for association members who choose to invest in additional training offered through the SouthWestern Mystery Shopping and Training Program.

"The SouthWestern board heard numerous examples of mystery shopping calls CSS made to dealerships," adds Flora. "The calls revealed there is a great need for training even among veteran dealership employees. CSS offers a program that produces results and the board believes the mystery shopping program is a good addition to SouthWestern's menu of dealer education and training."

To learn more about the free mystery shopping offer to get more information about the SouthWestern Mystery Shopping and Training Program, visit:

<http://www.swassn.com/education/MysteryShopping.html> or call SouthWestern Association at 800-762-5616. 

Agricultural equipment can now be listed seamlessly for sale or auction through IRONSearch.com

IRON Search® and IronPlanet® Form Alliance to Offer Buyers and Sellers Increased Selection and Speed

Equipment dealers can now seamlessly move inventory from the leading online remarketing outlet, IRONsearch.com, to IronPlanet.com for auction as the result of a newly formed alliance between the two industry leaders. Additionally, equipment to be auctioned at IronPlanet is now searchable on IRONsearch.com, expanding the largest available marketplace for buying and selling equipment online.

Subscribers who manage their used inventory and publish equipment listings for sale on the Web using IRON Search will now be able to consign inventory to auction on the IronPlanet auction site. Using IRON Search, dealers can choose which pieces of equipment go to auction and when, resulting in improved inventory turnover rates and reduced handling costs.

This alliance broadens the market for both equipment buyers and sellers. Buyers can search for equipment listings easier than ever on IRONsearch.com while sellers can post equipment listings and manage available inventory for sale online or at auction using a web browser anywhere, anytime.

"Being an IRON Search subscriber has never been more attractive. We offer dealers the most effective way to sell equipment, increase asset turn rates, and manage inventory risk with a one-stop solution," states David Greenberg, President of IRONsearch.com. He adds, "Everyone wants more – buyers want more selection and sellers want more ways to sell what they have at fair market value. This alliance makes it possible to provide more for both."

"We are very excited to offer dealers a seamless transition from IRON Search listing to IronPlanet's online auctions and the convenience of selling equipment without any undue transportation expense, plus IronPlanet's exclusive IronClad Assurance resulting in better prices for the dealer's equipment," says Jeff Jeter, Executive Vice President of IronPlanet. "We look forward to working with IRON Search to enhance their marketplace experience through the integration with IronPlanet and the ability for sellers to send aged inventory to IronPlanet."

Members with questions about Iron Solutions services should contact them at 877-251-7731. SW

Payments still going to urban, absentee landowners

Farm Payment Database Released

The giant database of individual farm payments built and hosted by the Environmental Working Group has been updated online at farm.ewg.org and the group claims there has been little change in the amount of money going to urban, absentee landowners since reforms were built into the 2008 Farm Bill.

Released on Thursday, June 23, the report tracks the subsidies paid between 1995 and 2010. The database first appeared in 2004 and the organization claims more than 300 million searches since it was launched. The organization has long been an opponent of payments to landowners and in the latest data set the group points to payment trends.

EWG says the "actively engaged" rule adopted in the 2008 bill didn't stop 7,767 residents of five Texas cities - Lubbock, Amarillo, Austin, San Angelo, and Corpus Christi - that collected more than \$61 million in subsidies. Lubbock rises to the top of cities with 100,000-plus populations with \$24,839 paid in 154 payments.

City Residents Receiving Farm Payments

In its press statement announcing the new list, EWG notes several other cities receiving payments. In Spokane, Wash., 1,224 residents cashed \$10,580,181 in farm subsidy checks. In New York City, 290 farm subsidy recipients pulled in a total of \$800,887, while 203 residents of Miami got \$2,472,071. In San Francisco, 179 residents split \$1,094,172, while 1,235 residents of Memphis got \$4,009,874 and 1,146 people in Denver received \$3,394,550. In Arizona, 1,205 residents of Phoenix, Mesa and Scottsdale divided up \$8,173,269 in payments.

In Wichita, 2,729 farm subsidy recipients pulled in a total of \$6,382,973 and in Topeka a total of \$2,872,115 farm subsidy payments were distributed to 1,318 people. In St. Louis, \$3,483,193 subsidy payments were split between 1,462 residents.

The group also notes that the largest farm operations continue to receive the majority of payments. Just 10 percent of subsidized farms collected 75 percent of payments. They note the average payment over the 16 years of data gathered (1995 to 2010), the average per recipient has been \$447,873.

As the 2012 Farm Bill debate heats up, this data set will be part of the debate.

Source: Guidelines to Profit, July 2011, newsletter for the Midwest Equipment Dealers Association. SW

Online Campus Training Helps Provide Consistent Level of Customer Service For All Dealership Locations

In 2009, the management team at Sydenstricker Farm and Lawn saw the potential of the SouthWestern Association Online Campus and enrolled their employees. These short, online training courses were the key to getting specific business training that was not always available through their mainline supplier's mandated training. Like many dealers, finding the right balance between equipping dealership employees with the right knowledge and getting the daily work done is difficult. It's easy for management and staff to become "trained out" with all the training requirements that dealers face each year.

Sydenstricker Farm and Lawn enrolled in the SWA Online Campus because employees like the short, informative courses on dealership specific issues including: customer service, sales, inventory management, safety and regulatory compliance. In fact, they have found that their employees typically like viewing the training sessions in group settings where they can discuss best practices and how they can better serve their customers. They have also learned new ways to increase revenues and decrease expenses. Like any training, a focused effort on a specific dealership metric is the key to seeing a real return on training dollars. As a progressive dealer organization focused on excellence, Sydenstricker utilizes the SWA Online Campus as another tool to gain a competitive advantage in their trade area.

Here's what Dealer Development Manager Nicole Fleak had to say about their involvement with the Online Campus.

Q. How does this training compare to mainline manufacturer training?

A. The SouthWestern Association Online Campus offers classes that help each of our employees with life skills that not only help them grow as an employee, but as an individual.

Q. What is your success in getting employees to take their courses?

A. Right now, we are using the classes with our store management teams and review at our biweekly store manager meetings. We have also started to roll out a few of the Administration classes with our office staff to help with taking messages and answering the phone consistently across our organization.

Q. What is one success story that you can tie back to an employee's training from the Online Campus?

A. Our biggest success is how we are more consistently greeting and providing the same level of customer service at all of our locations.

Q. How well has it been received by your employees and do they comment about the courses?

A. Employees say that the classes help remind them to stop

and think how they do things not just at work, but in their everyday lives.

Q. How simple was it to use and did you feel it was specific to your business?

A. The campus is very simple to use. Each employee gets their own username and password as well as a quick reference guide of how to use the campus. Right now, classes are assigned as homework for their next store manager meeting and the class information is sent out a week ahead along with the agenda for the meeting.

Q. Employees don't have time for more training, how do these classes work into your existing work days and/or Deere training demands?

A. The biggest benefit of the campus/classes is the 24/7 accessibility. The online courses are short and to the point. Most of our employees take the classes early morning, end of the day or during a downtime on a Saturday.

Q. What else can you tell us about being involved with the Online Campus?

A. As one of our corporate managers pointed out, "These classes are exactly what we have been looking for to help develop our employees. These are classes not offered by the manufacturer and are much more cost-effective. We save money in many ways including travel time, mileage, hotel expense, food expense and so on. And we also minimize time away from duties because the courses are typically only 10-15 minutes long.

Congratulations to Sydenstricker Farm and Lawn on their success and desire to grow their employees and business!

For more information about the Online Campus contact the SouthWestern Association offices at 800-762-5616. [SW](#)

Dealership: Sydenstricker Farm & Lawn

Locations: Kirksville, Macon, Chillicothe, Palmyra, Mexico, Columbia, Moscow Mills, Tipton, Curryville, Hermann, Missouri

Brand: John Deere

Number of Employees: 115 full-time
11 part-time

Online Campus Subscriber Since: 2009

Online Campus Course Views: 505



SouthWestern Association Golf Classic - A Big Success

Thank you to all participants and sponsors of the recent SouthWestern Association Golf Classic. The tournament was a fund raising event for the OSUIT Technician Training Program.

Look for tournament results and photos in the September issue of the *SouthWestern Association Flash*.



Federated Named to 2011 Ward 50® Top Performers

Federated Mutual Insurance Company and Federated Life Insurance Company have again been named to the 2011 Ward's 50 lists of top performing insurance companies. Federated is one of only two organizations that has had affiliated companies named to both the property-casualty and life-health Ward's 50 group of companies every year since 2001.

Ward Group® is a Cincinnati-based consulting firm specializing in the insurance industry. It reviews approximately 3,000 property and casualty companies and 800 life insurance companies each year.

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