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The back-end office operations staff are often the “heartbeat of the company”. And, yet they have to work hand-in-hand with the field staff who are “out there – in it”. If failures occur internally or externally, the whole snow event goes down the tubes – production suffers and the company has no cash-flow. From those who are doing the scheduling, to those who are directing what happens in the field, to chasing down the data needed to invoice timely – it can be a real mess if the organization is not fully prepared. It is integral to success that the back-office operations understand what occurs in the field. The same pertains to the field staff as they should have exposure to what goes on in the office. Neither group fully understands the challenges that occur to the other group. Here we will hone organizational skills and problem solving, plus get in-depth about the right way to ask owners for more equipment (cost justification) and to get the field staff to properly integrate with those in the office. If the field personnel don’t understand and realize the importance of streamlined office operations, all the work done in the field is for naught. Poor communications can lead a company to poor cash management, poor record keeping, unacceptable management practices, field failures and unhappy customers. This, in turn, can hurt a company’s ability to perform professionally in the eyes of its stakeholders, employees and customers. Attendees of this combined External and Internal Ops Event will discuss HR issues as well as concerns surrounding service providers and their performance. Training properly, overseeing equipment maintenance, dealing with the inevitable “holy crap” situation all while keeping a cool head and ensuring the paper flow is performed efficiently and with speed as well as efficiency is a skill set that support staff need to have.

2017 INTERNAL / EXTERNAL OPS FACILITATORS



JOHN ALLIN



PEGGY ALLIN



JERRE HEYER



RUSS COLTMAN

Monday – September 11, 2017

- 12:45 PM Flagship Trolley to pick up group from hotel
- 1:00 PM Welcome to 2017 Internal/External Operations Event
- 1:30 PM Introductions and review of agenda
- 1:45 PM Defining the roles
How do you have your teams set up for production – per push, seasonal, hourly?
Many individuals make up the Team that produces the work for the company.
Production Manager, Field Manager, Operations Manager, Crew Leader, Sidewalk Crew Leader, Deicing Truck Operator, Dispatch Manager, Office Manager, Collections Manager, etc. have a say in how things unfold before, during and after an “event”. Let’s talk about expectation levels and if they fit into the overall business philosophy of the Company? Those involved in the operations of the company, at some point, touch the flow of information as it enters the system. Who are these folks, what are their roles and how do we keep them all focused in the right direction. This includes field personnel, dispatch personnel, accounting and administrative staffing.
- 3:15 PM Interaction – the good, the bad and the ugly.
How do we keep everyone working from the same playbook? And how do we resolve the inevitable conflicts that arise between the office and the field? Not just during the snow event, but before AND after the event is over. Here, we’ll discuss these various challenges and how to address them successfully.
- 4:30 PM Break for the day
Picked up for Group Dinner by Flagship Trolley

Tuesday – September 12, 2017

- 8:15 AM Flagship Trolley to pick up Group at Hotel
- 8:30 AM Benchmarking for Profit
There are many factors to measuring a company’s success. Some aspects are the Management/Leadership Staff, Staff Wellness and Company Finances. A well-versed management and support team will engage people to successfully achieve the company goals, maintain a healthy working environment, and still be able to measure and monitor all things money related.
- 9:30 AM Sales and Technology
Often the office staff is in charge of making sure there is a sustainable customer base, the effectiveness of the use of technology will aide in determining profitability. However, profitability also involves viable productivity by those in the field. Whether the office staff will champion this or if this will be through a software based system, customer evaluations and proper field management are essential to cash flow and profits.
- 10:45 AM Break
- 11:00 AM Accounting
Everyone in the company gets to play with numbers, even if only on the fringes of the organization. To that end - understanding the basics and how the numbers affect the overall organization is paramount to the ultimate success of the internal operations professional. Whether using Quick Books or an excel program, proficiency often eludes us. Basic and advanced questions/concerns will be dealt with here.
- Noon Lunch

- 1:00 PM The True Cost of Equipment
Repair or replace? What is the right call for the company owner? Too often the decision is made based upon “gut”. This is wrong and can ultimately cost the company way too much money. Properly evaluating the true cost of either decision can mean the difference between a “nice profit” at the end of the season – or an “adequate profit”.
- 2:00 PM Streamlining the Field Reporting, Billing and Collections Processes
How fast are the invoices going out of your company? This is almost solely dependent on how quickly the information comes in from the field. Discussion about “best practices” with regards to getting the information to the office and then getting the invoices out the door quickly (and correctly) will occur here. Once those invoices are in the customer’s hands, they will determine your cash flow. Unfortunately, collections can also determine that cash flow. We will also discuss Credit Cards and the pros/cons of accepting payments via credit cards, as well as other methods of electronic payment.
- 3:00 PM Break
- 3:15 PM Snow Equipment and its True Cost
Repair or replace? What is the right call for the company owner? Too often the decision is made based upon “gut”. This is wrong and can ultimately cost the company way too much money. Properly evaluating the true cost of either decision can mean the difference between a “nice profit” at the end of the season – or an “adequate profit”. We will go over basic equipment as well as technology driven equipment so a cursory understanding of how the equipment works is gained.
- 4:30 PM Break for the day
Picked up for Group Dinner by Flagship Trolley

Wednesday – September 13, 2017

- 8:15 AM Flagship Trolley to pick up Group at Hotel
- 8:30 AM Human Resources, Subs and Service Providers
In most companies, the Office Manager doubles as the HR Director. Here, we will review the specific challenges associated with the HR Position. Having spent many years managing hundreds of people, Peggy Allin will discuss the specific issues associated with employees and/or utilizing Independent Service Providers. This can be a challenge – especially from the viewpoint of the Field Management Staff. However, it IS the best way to grow the company without spending tons of money on equipment. Whether you use a technology based solution to track what is happening, or a paper based solution – **preparation** is the key to the overall success of the Service Provider and/or employee network
- 10:30 AM Break
- 10:45 AM Equipment – Boys (and Girls) and Their Toys
Snowfighters will have a multitude of equipment at this Event, so you can see the latest and greatest. Play with ‘em, learn about ‘em – and see how these new pieces will fit into your organization. Even the office personnel should know and understand equipment and its use in the company’s operations. We’ll have manufacturers’ reps in-house to answer questions and explain the benefits of their respective equipment.
- 12:00 PM Lunch

- 1:00 PM Owners, Gosh they're hard to Read!
The owner and the office manager are joined at the hip. Although, too often the relationship is contentious, at best. How do we develop a relationship that fosters trust and a cohesive interaction?
- 3:00 PM Break
- 3:15 PM Social Media – how to make the most of it
Social Media is here to stay. How can you engage your audience? How do you plan out your posts? Here we will develop a monthly calendar to help you get started with a planned social media program.
- 4:30 PM Break for the day. Flagship Trolley to take group back to hotel.
Dinner this evening is on your own.

Thursday – September 14, 2017

- 8:15 AM Flagship Trolley to pick up Group at Hotel
- 8:30 AM Communications and Contract Management
Good communications with the office staff combined with proper safety protocols in the field can help keep the lawyers at bay. Anyone can file suit against anyone else for any reason. However, instituting Best Practice can assist the Company in appropriately defending these types of unfortunate and unforeseen occurrences. It is never as simple as taking the signed contract and putting it into a file drawer. Here too, there needs to be a process that is followed so that all pertinent information is captured. From assigning the account to a proper route, to scheduling the "end of season review" – a process is paramount to the successful behind the scenes operation. We will lay out that process in a format that is easy to follow and (more importantly) implement within the company structure.
- 10:00 AM Break
- 10:15 AM To Report or Not to Report. How much is enough?
Keeping a calm, cool and collected face can keep the troops from panicking when the snow hits the fan. No doubt, in some instances chaos ensues due to the very nature of our business. Reporting protocols that address adverse situations can save everyone considerable heartache long after the snow or ice event is over. Additionally, someone has to exhibit calm even if they are scared to their boots. Often, this is the office manager, or the lead person in the field. Here we will discuss such instances that challenge our ability to remain calm under pressure, and what was done to ensure things run smoothly regardless of the ferocity of the storm outside.
- Noon End of Event
Lunch is served to those who have time

Notes:

Snowfighters Institute will supply transportation with Hansen’s Errand Service to/from the Erie Airport at no charge to the attendees. Transportation to/from the Cleveland-Pittsburgh-Buffalo Airports can be provided at a nominal charge. Please call Debbie if you need further assistance at 814-455-1991 or debbie@SnowfightersInstitute.com. Your travel itinerary should be sent to debbie@SnowfightersInstitute.com to allow for proper planning of transportation to and from the airport.

Included in registration fees:

- Group Lunch on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
- Group Dinner on Monday and Tuesday
- All handout materials
- Transportation from and to Erie Airport as/if needed
- Transportation to and from hotel to Snowfighters Institute

Hotel reservations must be made by, August 20, 2017, to guarantee discounted rate. Call TownePlace Suites at 814-866-7100. Be sure to mention Snowfighters Institute to get into the room block at \$99.00 a night. You have your choice of a Studio King, Studio Queen or a Double Queen. Should you need a Two Bedroom Suite, please contact Snowfighters Institute for assistance. To make your reservation please click here to [book your group rate for External Operations](#).

Wednesday Night Dinner Options

There are many restaurants close to the hotel or across the street by the Millcreek Mall including but not limited to:

