

Creative Living

Corinne Abatt editor/644-1100



(O)E

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organizing Dorothy Lehmkuhl

Q. I work for a software company, doing direct marketing as well as many sales seminars. I enjoy my work but get frustrated when I see companies looking at specific needs, such as one new program, rather than seeing the bigger picture. They often need to learn how their departments can work together better, etc. but I'm not paid to help them in that way. What can I do?

A. In our phone conversation, we agreed that you could begin teaching team-building seminars on your own, and that joining the National Speakers Association would be an excellent way to network and learn to market yourself.

Like you, all too many people have burning messages in them, but don't know how to go about spreading their word. Others have had different goals in the backs of their heads for years, but haven't acted upon them because they don't know how to go about implementing their ideas. Perhaps they want to be a bookkeeper, be more fashionable, make friends easier, be a better decision maker, write a book or overcome shyness. Still others suffer miserable relationships because of poor communication skills but don't know where to turn for help.

Lack of information and support is their greatest problem. People often procrastinate because locating exactly the right resource is extremely difficult. Finding the precise support needed could change your life, so don't be afraid to ask for information. People are usually wonderful about helping.

The key is to get started looking. Ask friends, relatives, business associates, consultants or college counselors. Check out associations in the reference section of the library. Look in the phone book and start calling anyone even vaguely related to what you want. If you face a blind alley, just back out and start in another direction. Don't get discouraged.

Outlays of money can also impede pet projects. It may seem that \$500 or \$1,000 is too much to spend for help. As you point out, look at the bigger picture. If your plan is to reimburse you either financially or emotionally, or if it will continue to bleed you, then it is too much to spend. If you are convinced your project will repay you many times over financially, change your life dramatically or give you great personal satisfaction, then it could be the best investment of your life.

You obviously have what it takes to do what you want, you just have to do what it takes to get what you want.



condo queries Robert M. Melsner

Q. Our management company has recently gotten involved in our condo project and suggested that we terminate the contract with our landscaping contractor. The management company has suggested that we come up with someone else because he doesn't like our landscaping contractor. There are some on the board that are concerned because we are in the middle of a two or three year contract with the landscaping contractor. We just hired the management company over the last year or so and are wondering what to do. There is a difference of opinion on the board as to whether or not we can terminate the landscaping contractor. What do we do?

A. You are best advised to check out why the management company wants to terminate the landscaping contractor, particularly if you are satisfied with his work. Find out who the management company has in mind to replace it and find out whether that replacement is an affiliated company of the management company. If so, you may be getting an indication of how your management company is. Find out from your lawyer, in writing, whether or not you can even terminate your landscaping contractor before you go any further. If you are satisfied with your landscaping contractor, particularly if you are paying a little more, you are well advised to stay with him.

The management company, if it is not acting properly, may be subjecting itself to a suit by the landscaping contractor for wrongful interference with the contractual relations between the association and the landscaping contractor. In short, a personality dispute or self-aggrandizement by the management company may be leading the association into hot water. Check your legal rights.

Robert Melsner is a Birmingham attorney specializing in condominiums, real estate and corporate law. You're invited to submit to topics that you would like to see discussed in this column, including questions about condominiums, by writing him in care of 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 467, Birmingham 48012. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.

Shredded paper good garden mulch

By Earl Aronson
special writer

weeder's guide

Earl
Aronson

Q LD newspapers create a problem when they fill up landfills and clutter basements and garages. But there is a good use for old newspapers that helps bring about a more productive, weed-free garden.

A mulch of shredded newspapers conserves moisture, moderates temperatures and discourages weed growth. It can also shelter seedlings on exposed soil from sun, wind and rain. The paper generally decomposes gradually into soil-enriching humus by the end of the season.

Newspaper strips mixed with grass clippings soak up excess moisture to encourage an airy, open texture in compost piles. The high-carbon newspaper rots readily in combination with the high-nitrogen clippings, and household wastes such as fruit and vegetable peelings, egg shells, coffee grounds and tea leaves. Newspapers generally contain 75 percent ground wood pulp and 25 percent purified fiber or cellulose. Wood pulp contains the nutrients and trace elements that were in the trees originally. Newspaper ink is made from carbon black and mineral oil and is not harmful to plants or microbial soil life. Newspapers are said to be rich in carbohydrate energy and have been successfully fed to cattle by agricultural researchers at several university experiment stations.

But researchers advise against using old newspaper inserts and magazines in gardens. Newspaper shredders are available. One that reportedly quickly

slices newspapers — up to 12 thicknesses at once — into half-inch ribbons features self-sharpening circular blades. For information, write to: The Kinsman Co., River Road, Point Pleasant, PA 19550.

NEW EMPRESS APPLE: A new apple, described as "semi-firm and snappy, with good color, texture and size," has been named Empress by Cornell University's New York Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva.

The apple, with a pedigree dating back two and a half centuries, is reported similar in appearance and some characteristics to Empire, named in 1866. However, Empress ripens a month earlier, which is "a real plus," says Dr. Roger D. Way, professor emeritus. "It means that quality New York State apples will be available to consumers well before many other varieties."

The parents of Empress are Jonamac and the New Jersey-bred Vista Bella. Jonamac is a cross of McIntosh and Jonathan. Way said: "Unlike many varieties that produce well every other year, Empress is an annual cropper with consistently good yield. And the apple is the product of a relatively small tree, enabling growers to plant more trees per acre, thus increasing profits."

NO-TILL EVALUATION: Because of the severe 1988 drought, No-Till, a popular conservation method in which a new crop is planted in the residue of the previous crop, is facing increased evaluation.

"Farmers should not be in a hurry to abandon No-Till on its showing during the serious 1988 drought," said Wilson Sealing, chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service.

"In average and limited drought

years," he said, "No-Till generally results in better yields than conventional tillage, and we have those conditions more often than we have extended drought conditions." He said it was too early to tell about 1989, but field reports indicate conditions "seem to vary, depending on soils, cropping patterns, time of spring planting and spotty rainfall." Illinois reported that fields No-Tilled for several years looked better this season than did those in their first or second year of No-Till.

Earl Aronson welcomes questions, but they must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.)

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