

Focus

Employer Awareness And How It Works

By Joanne Boorsma

Not all employers support professional organizations. Your employers may or may not support your attendance at International Right of Way Association (IR/WA) meetings. Why should they? From the employer's viewpoint, what are the benefits? Do your employer, your Chapter and, most importantly, you yourself, benefit from your membership in a professional association? The answer should be an emphatic, "Yes!"

What is a professional? Webster defines "professional" as, "of, engaged in, or worthy of the high standards of, a profession." He defines a profession as, "a vocation or occupation requiring advanced education and training, and involving intellectual skills." I couldn't help but notice that in a later definition he described profession as, "loosely, any occupation."

Here are some advantages and disadvantages to membership in a professional association, from an employer's standpoint:

Advantages to the Employer

- Access to new ideas (employees that stay current on changes and new concepts are, of course, far better employees)
- Personal associations (liaison; meeting of minds of people with similar work situations and problems)
- Specialized courses (the IR/WA is the only access we have to specialized right-of-way courses)
- Recruitment possibilities (the opportunity to gain good employees)
- Real Estate credits (a few states have allowed IR/WA courses to serve as real estate credit)
- Recognized professional designation (more and more people in and out of the right-of-way profession are acknowledging, recognizing and rewarding the time,

effort and ability which this designation portrays)

Disadvantages to the Employer

- Money (dollars out of the door)
- Time away from the office (the employer himself)
- Office time spent on association business (if you are an active member of a professional association, you will probably have to spend some office time doing association work)
- Recruitment away (loss of employee that took time to develop into a good employee)
- Loss of productivity (while employees are out of office)
- Potential personality conflicts, potential resentment of co-workers by non-members (these represent 100 percent of the morale problem)

It is essential for the private companies to be aware of people, their positions and their capabilities. Many private employers join professional associations for just this purpose.

The International Right of Way Association through its local chapters, seminars, forums, literature, and educational programs provides its members the accessibility to new concepts.

Does your Chapter conscientiously cultivate, elevate, enhance, augment, instruct or direct the personal growth of one

and all? It should. Your local Chapter should be one of serious effort to promote education and to broaden perspectives. Your Chapter should be a motivating force to each member, a force which extends into every individual's working environment, and personal growth.

Does your membership in the International Right of Way Association provide a benefit to your employer? In any business, PRODUCTIVITY is the name of the game. When productivity is UP, you have happy employees and happy employers. Planned personal growth enhances productivity.

Certainly, personalities also enter into this. A hard fact which every employer knows is that one out of every five employees is going to be a dud. One or even two of these same five simply appear and warm their chairs. They are definitely not producers, at any rate. This leaves the last two, the dynamic duo (See diagram). Remember when the dynamic duo first arrived? Everyone was impressed (possibly even bowled over) by their enthusiasm, their capabilities, and their initiative. What about now? By the dynamic duo's example, are the duds and the chair warmers encouraged to attempt competence? Do they begin to utilize their own intelligence? Does the dynamic duo tend to increase the chair warmer's productivity? Or, are they themselves stifled and frustrated?

By some means and for various rea-

