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Hedahl's Headlines

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



Holiday Hours

Christmas and New Year's Day are both on Monday this year, and all stores and divisions of Hedahl's will be closed. We'll also be closed on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, both on Sunday. Please work with your manager about the schedule for Saturday, December 23 and Saturday, December 30.

New Employees

We have no multiple-of-five work anniversaries this month. Please welcome two new employees.

JERRY LEAF – "Twig" is new on delivery and in the warehouse at our Detroit Lakes store. From Pelican Rapids, MN, he is married with one daughter. Twig enjoys fishing and antiques.

KEVIN HERREN – "Ralphie" is new in the shop at Main Street Tire. Originally from Dupree, SD, he has three brothers. Ralphie enjoys hunting, fishing, and camping.

Shifting Job Responsibilities

Many of you call Headquarters or BENCO on a regular basis. It might be useful to know that we've had some changes in personnel. **Dee Persson** will now be working as the risk management coordinator and in the Marketing Department. These are both duties that **Lori Alfstad** used to do. Lori will continue doing her work for Equipment Leasing Enterprises, but she is also the office manager for BENCO Equipment. And **Gina Fracassi** will be handling the receptionist duties that Dee used to do.

Here are the phone numbers for each of them:

Dee — Ext. 231

Lori — Ext. 229

Gina — Ext. 235

Freight

By Larry Lysengen

Freight is one of those indispensable jobs that keeps our customers and our stores in business. We depend on that truck pulling up to our door everyday without exception. Not only do we expect our freight on time, but we also expect to get all of our packages. Cross Country handles most of our freight. They do a very good job, but they need a little help from us. We need to fill out the Hedahls Cross Country Manifest completely:

- Who is shipping the freight,
- Where is it going,
- Who is paying for this transportation?

Where we sometimes get in trouble is shipping to someone other than our stores. **Remember, when we are shipping cores or warranties or returning merchandise to the warehouse, make sure you mark the proper billing method.**

There have been some errors when handling returns. We always send it to the right place; we just forget to fill in how it's going to be billed. If nothing is checked in the Billing space, the shipping store will always be billed, and this can be very expensive. So if in doubt about how to ship it, check the **Uni-**

Select Black Book:

it's all in there.

In the near future, Cross Country has a new computer program that will make this process faster, but until then, keep filling out that manifest completely.



SALES TOOLS

IDEAS FOR BETTER SELLING:

Counter Sense

Everyone who's worked the counter at an auto parts store knows what it's like when you've got a couple of customers standing in front of you, a phone stuck in your ear and another one or two ringing. This, my friends, is called business as usual. Juggling the walk-in customers and the phone calls and seeing to it that everyone gets what they need and is happy when the transaction is finished.

Here's a couple of questions that might go through your mind when all this is going on.

What do I do when everything's happening at once? In an ideal world, the phone should be answered on the second ring, but there are times when you're busy and just can't. If at all possible, never let the phone ring more than four times, even if you can't take care of the customer's needs immediately. People hate being put on hold, but they hate it even more when no one answers the phone. Answer it, "Hedahls Auto Parts, Dale speaking. Could you hold please?" Then be sure you remember the customer is there. If you notice another counter person is caught up, ask them to take the on-hold line. Or if you are caught up and notice a line on hold, pick it up and ask the person if they have been helped.

What if the person the caller wants is busy? If someone calls and asks for your manager or anyone else in the store and you know that person is busy, tell the caller, "Dale is on another line right now, can I help you?" They may ask to be called back, but maybe you can help them.

What about a walk-in customer? If you're waiting on customers or on the phone or both, as often happens, and a customer walks in, be sure to acknowledge them within five seconds after they have walked in the door. This can be as simple as looking up and saying "Hi," or "Welcome," or a simple "Someone will be right with you."

I hope many of you are thinking, "I already do all those things. It's just common sense." And so I say, "Good. Keep it up." If you're not doing this, then you should start. People like attention and they like knowing you recognize them. Better yet, if you know them, greet them by name. Remember, most of our customers come to us with problems, and it's our job to help solve those problems and make sure they leave smiling. Let's start their good experience within five seconds of when they call or come into our store. Thanks, Dale.

GIVE THEM THE COINS FIRST!

Maybe it's because I'm from the old school. Actually the school I went to really wasn't that old, so I guess it must be because I'm getting older. It really annoys me when I buy something and the salesperson doesn't count out my change.

Now I realize that when I learned to count out change you needed to do it manually because the tills we had didn't have computers in them to figure it out for you. So we counted it twice: once from the till and again into the customer's hand. Now I've made a lot of change for customers over the years, working in a grocery store in high school and later at the counter at Hedahls. It's always amazed me that occasionally the money changed (no pun intended) from the amount you counted out from the till to the amount you give the customer. Magic? Hmm. No, just human error.

Recently I was at Wendy's in Rapid City, and I bought a small chocolate frosty for \$1.29 and gave the clerk a \$5.00 bill. He rang it up on the till, counted the change into his hand. He handed it to me and said, "Here you are." I'm sorry: I stood there and counted it to myself, all \$3.71 worth. The kid looked at me like I was nuts, but to me it's a courtesy to the customer. It says "We value your business and your money."

Do it this way. If the bill is \$1.29 out of five dollars, spread the seventy-one cents out on the palm of your hand so the customer can count it. Hand the coins to the customer, and say, "Seventy-one cents." Then count out the bills into the customer's hand, and say, "Three dollars." Coins first means the customer is less likely to drop anything.

You just did your best to make the customer happy by providing the right products for their needs. Finish it off by counting out the change. You'll be surprised: it might just make their day. It happens so little anymore when someone counts out my change back to me, that when it happens I say, "Thanks for counting out the change."

Coins First. Thanks, Dale



Changing Investments

For those of you with ESOP/401 (k) investments, December is one of two times during the year when you can change the amount you are investing (June is the other time). Simply contact either Darlene or Harold at Headquarters before the close of business on December 29, and let them know what you want changed.

There will be forms to fill out, so give yourself time to get the forms back to Headquarters. Fax is OK.

Return Sign-up Forms

You will soon be receiving sign-up forms for our Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). **All employees** (full-time, part-time, and temporary) must complete one of these forms. You should indicate one of three choices:

1. Enrollment in the plan if you are eligible,
2. Re-enrollment "as is" if you want no change, or
3. Re-enrollment with a change in the amount you are investing.

Even if you do not qualify for the ESOP or if you are not interested in investing, you are to fill out the form with your employee number and store or division, and mark the appropriate choice. These forms need to be returned to Darlene Birney at Headquarters by December 15.



Holiday Party

Kelly Inn in Bismarck

Saturday, December 2

Social at 6:00 • Dinner at 7:00

Please plan to join us!

Regional Holiday Gatherings

Also several regional holiday gatherings are planned throughout the company. You and your spouse or guest are welcome to come to any of these parties. Just let us know. Here is a listing of the holiday parties that we could confirm.

Aberdeen and Redfield

Saturday, January 6, 5:30 social & 6:30 dinner, at The Flame in Aberdeen

Detroit Lakes

Some time in January

Glendive and Sidney

Friday, December 15, 6:30, at the Elks Club

Rapid City & BENCO III

Saturday, December 2, 5:30, at the Firehouse in Rapid City

Watertown

Friday, December 22, late afternoon, at the store

Peace
on
Earth

