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How to Hire Superstar Employees
By Chris McIntyre
How solid is your current hiring process? One of the best ways to get the right talent on board is to have a trusted hiring process in place. Read this article for a six-step process you can adopt as is or tailor to meet your needs.

The Importance of Recruiting a Diverse Workforce
By Elizabeth M. Rice, SPHR
Businesses have started to recognize diversity in the workplace as a business strategy that maximizes productivity, creativity and loyalty of employees while meeting the needs of their clients or customers. In a competitive marketplace, an organization that puts people first - regardless of their race, religion, gender, age, sexual preference, or physical disability has an advantage over the other players.

8 Ways to Get the Employee Behavior You Want
By the Employers Resource Council
Behavior is central to a productive and successful workplace. It affects how we pay people for what they merit, who we promote, and what we recognize and reward. And, ultimately, how our employees behave day to day ends up significantly affecting our culture and business.
The old saying goes, “it can’t work smoothly with square wheels”. Many of us are so busy caught up in meeting goals and objectives as defined by our business that we generally do not have the time to stop, step back and look for obvious better ways of doing things.

The reality is, in any organization, the critical themes of communication, leadership, motivation, quality, and managing and leading change, must be addressed to make real progress forward.

Through the efforts of our leadership and staff, NPMA is clearly moving in the right direction as an effective voice for our industry. Through our new, shared vision we have begun challenging ourselves to not become complacent, but rather proactively define the future of our industry.

Over the past two years, NPMA has taken a concerted look at itself to ensure that we are not riding on square wheels. We revisited our strategic plan, implemented a road map to the future and even launched a new logo to graphically demonstrate the changes that we have put into place. And, while what we’ve been doing has worked, in order to continue our pattern of growth there must be opportunities for improvement.

NPMA has the capacity and capability to support and protect your company’s interests. However, maximizing our effectiveness is a difficult task that must involve all of us. Your involvement is critical.

Involvement means that you acknowledge your ability to make change. And it’s your ability to make change that impacts our world.

As your organization, NPMA is committed to representing you and your interests in the most professional manner possible. Of course, distractions will occur, however, the primary objective must be to remain effective and represent you and your concerns. But … to represent you, we must be able to hear your voice clearly. For that reason, I hope that you will take this opportunity and my invitation to become increasingly involved in your organization.

Each member has different talents and has reached his or her level of success by different paths. You have a hands-on reality and know the bumps of the journey. It is by sharing your talents and experiences with your colleagues that we can each make our future more secure and stable as we each move toward the future that we all desire. But if you don’t feel like you are involved in the decisions that your leadership is making, becoming and staying motivated and engaged is difficult.

The fact is we cannot do it without your help. If you have not become involved in your association yet, there is no better time like the present. Sign up for a committee. Send a letter to your congressman. Participate in an NPMA event. Sign your staff up for a webinar or online training program. There are many ways for you to get involved… and we need you to do so. As has been true for more than over three quarters of a century … your involvement is our lifeblood. We would not exist without it.
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How solid is your current hiring process? One of the best ways to get the right talent on board is to have a trusted hiring process in place. Here’s a 6-step process you can adopt as is or tailor to your needs.

**STEP 1: DEFINE THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND PEAS (PEOPLE SKILLS, WORK ETHICS, AND ATTITUDES)**

You probably have a good sense of the hard objectives you expect your applicants to achieve, such as a certain percent increase in sales, a certain number of products produced per month, or manage x number of people in accomplishing y tasks. Every successful small business should have its basic business metrics and key measures.

You’ll also need to have a strong sense of the critical soft skills you expect from employees. Getting the best out of your superstars means expecting and measuring all critical success factors. By knowing all the necessary elements for success in a particular position, you can draft the position description.

**STEP 2: REQUIRE A STRATEGIC COVER LETTER**

When you publicize your description of the position, request a cover letter that requires candidates to research your company. Ask two or three open-ended questions that would require candidates to dig into your website or otherwise research your organization.

Here are a few examples of good, strategic cover letter questions:
- How do you see yourself relating to our core values? Why?
- What is it about our history that you most identify with? Why?
- Which of our products are you most excited about? Why?

Unlike a resume, a strategic cover letter addresses questions specific to your organization. A strategic cover letter can weed out 30 percent of the potential candidates who just won’t invest the extra effort to

**AVOID THESE INTERVIEW MISTAKES**

One of the trickiest tasks you’ll have as a pest management professional is hiring employees. The interview process might seem straightforward enough, but business owners often slip up when talking to candidates. That means it’s critical to prepare before interviewing for a job opening. Here are four common mistakes first-time business owners make when talking to job candidates — and how to fix them.

**Mistake No. 1: You get too personal.**

When it comes to questions you want to avoid during a job interview, anything that could be perceived as possibly discriminatory ought to be at the top of your list. While it’s important to understand where a person is coming from, you never want to ask a job candidate’s age, nationality, religion, or marital status, for example. Those questions can be perceived as discriminatory and put your business at risk.

And while it might seem obvious not to ask an interviewee’s nationality, for example, some employers don’t realize questions that may come up in small talk can also be dangerous. For example, avoid asking seemingly innocuous questions like whether or not a candidate has kids or what organizations they belong to.

Of course you’ll want to know if there’s anything stopping potential employees from coming into the office when you need them, but phrase those questions carefully. For example, rather than asking if someone has young kids or observes any holidays, ask if there are any restrictions that would stop that person from working on the weekends.

**Mistake No. 2: You ask canned questions.**

While it’s important to avoid asking pointed questions about a candidate’s personal background, staying too general is also a bad move.

Sticking to behavioral questions will help you get more candid and useful answers. Rather than asking interviewees to tell you about themselves, for example, ask about their greatest personal achievement and how they accomplished it. You can learn a lot about candidates’ work ethic and level of commitment by focusing on their experiences rather than their family or the organizations they belong to.

**Mistake No. 3: You gloss over the demands of the job.**

Many small business owners are afraid to tell job candidates about the long work hours required, afraid that might scare them away. Being open about how often new hires will need to be in the office is a detail every small business owner should make clear from the onset. If work hours seem too unreasonable to discuss, you probably need to reevaluate your expectations.

**Mistake No. 4: You’re too open with rejected candidates.**

Once you’ve interviewed and turned a handful of people down for a position, chances are someone will call up asking why they didn’t get the job. While you may want to be helpful by offering constructive criticism, it’s better to just tell rejected candidates you found someone who was a better fit and leave it at that.

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respond. Of those who do respond, 30 to 40 percent will probably disqualify themselves with incorrect grammar and poor attention to detail, such as not answering your strategic questions. That could leave you with only the top 30 percent to consider for the next phase of your job hunt.

**STEP 3: ASSEMBLE A HIRING PANEL**

What if you happen to be a CEO who doesn’t have access to a panel of superstars? You might consider asking a few of your most trusted vendors, suppliers and contractors for their confidential assistance in your hiring process. I’ve also seen small-business owners contract with management consulting companies for their temporary and confidential assistance with their hiring process.

You might also try a staffing agency. Some staffing agencies can actually serve as a panel in your hiring process. Good agencies can offer expert interviewers and help you focus your position description, PEAs and cover letter questions.

**STEP 4: DIG INTO THE RESUMES**

Divvy up the remaining resumes along with your requirements for the position. Have the panel members take a week or so to pick their top five preferences and prepare a blurb or two on why they chose their candidates.

Be sure your panel defines the “why” as well. That can help crystallize position requirements and clues about your culture. Then get the panel back together to review the blurbs and tally the votes for all potential hires. Hash out some kind of consensus on the top few candidates to bring in for an interview.

**STEP 5: WIN THE INTERVIEW**

Rally the panel and conduct the interviews. Agree in advance which questions will be asked of all interviewees, and stick firmly to them. Straying from your pre-determined questions can skew the dynamics of each interview.

Immediately after each interview, have panel members take the time individually to record their thoughts and numerically rate each interviewee. If you or the panel members run right off to the next activity without accomplishing this, you’ll likely forget noteworthy subtleties that might have been the difference maker.

Reconvene the panel immediately after everyone has had some time for individual assessments, and combine comments and ratings on a scorecard. Scorecards can help you split hairs in competitive hiring situations.

**STEP 6: 90-DAY CHECK-IN**

Check in with your new hire after 90 days of employment specifically about their overall new-hire experience. That’s usually enough time for you to have a good sense of an employee’s overall capability and work ethic and offer feedback directly related to all the key skills you hired them to deliver. Pull out the job description, and offer specific examples of how they are hitting the right target — or missing it, as the case may be.

Be sure to ask how you can better support the employee in doing their job. Ask for feedback on their initial experiences and on your functional processes. There’s nobody better to help you see your process inefficiencies than qualified new folks, so take advantage of their fresh perspectives about your organization. They may have great feedback on needlessly complicated internal and external processes.

Leadership Expert and Motivational Speaker, Chris McIntyre is the Author of the new small business leadership book series “The Roadmap to Freedom.” He was also a presenter at the NPMA Academy in 2011. You can reach him at chris@roadmaptofreedom.com and learn more at www.christophermcintyre.com
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If a company is only as good as their employees, then it stands to reason that a great deal of energy should be devoted to hiring the most talented individuals. By branching out to a diverse workforce, employers have access to a greater pool of candidates thereby improving the odds of hiring the best person. In a competitive marketplace, an organization that puts people first — regardless of their race, religion, gender, age, sexual preference, or physical disability has an advantage over the other players.

Just as the workforce is becoming more diverse so is your market. Employees who mirror the customers you serve can benefit an organization since they will feel as if they hold a common ground. Furthermore, employees with different perspectives can help provide companies with a holistic view of the market, identify unmet needs and identify new opportunities. As the value of diversity continues to grow in the business community and elsewhere, recruiting and retaining diverse employees is becoming even more important to continued organizational success.

Recruitment and retention of valuable employees is now recognized as one of the most important issues facing corporate America. By creating an environment where all employees feel included,
Employees who mirror the customers you serve can benefit an organization since they … hold a common ground.

Publicize job openings in different venues to attract a diverse workforce.

Look beyond obvious recruitment methods and venues for good people. There are many sites online that help facilitate equal opportunity employment and include: Yahoo! en Español, DiversityInc, America’s Job Bank, The Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, the Society of Women Engineers, the National Society of Black Engineers, and the Black Executive Exchange program.

Be aware of current legislation.

Staying current on the latest discrimination legislation will help you avoid potential litigation. Once the appropriate steps are taken, learning how to manage the diverse workforce will take some time. It requires education, sensitivity and awareness of how individuals from different cultures handle communication, business etiquette, and relate to management. Promoting workforce diversity requires HR recruitment of competent and qualified employees and the accommodation of individual needs within the context of the work team and the organization.

Whatever challenges diversity may create the benefits far outweigh the costs. Diversity allows for flexibility within an organization thereby strengthening the ability to respond to changing environments and demands which are critical to ensuring that your organization stays competitive in the global economy.

Create a diversity policy and publicize it.

Your policy should set formal goals and strategies pertaining to creating an equal opportunity environment. Once your policy is in place it should be made public both internally and externally.

Write job descriptions as to not exclude anyone.

Your job description should clearly be written for all types of applicants and should in no way discriminate.

Elizabeth M. Rice is with Innovative Employee Solutions®, which specializes in payrolling and outsourced HR administrative services for various industries including technology, engineering, medical, insurance, clerical, research companies and many more. Visit www.innovativeemployeesolutions.com for more information.
Behavior is central to a productive and successful workplace. It affects how we pay people for what they merit, who we promote, and what we recognize and reward. And, ultimately, how our employees behave day to day ends up significantly affecting our culture and business.

Because of this, it’s critically important for organizations to make sure that their employees’ behavior matches what is needed in the organization. This includes the basics (respect, honesty, etc.), but also the behaviors that are crucial to the business’ success (creativity, initiative, risk taking, etc.).

Much of what we try to do as managers is steer employees to behave in the ways that we want them to. We want them to stop complaining, take more initiative, produce better quality work, improve their performance, serve our customers better, act like leaders, and the list goes on. Essentially, we want them to change their behavior, and we’re often stumped (and sometimes even baffled) over how to do it. Influencing and changing behavior is tricky in the workplace. Fortunately, there are some “tried and true” ways to do it.

Here are eight (8) ways to get the employee behavior you want.

1. **Hire people with the right values and attitudes.**

   It starts and ends with who you hire. Research shows that people’s underlying values and attitudes drive most of their behavior in the workplace. When you hire people with values that align with your organization’s values as well as those with a good attitude, you are more likely to encounter fewer issues with employee behavior. Their behaviors will have a higher likelihood of being in line with your organization’s values.

   Hiring the right people who fit your culture and values means you will spend less time dealing with and managing
behavior you don’t want in the workplace, and more time working with and recognizing people with the behaviors that you do want.

2. **Communicate the behavior you want.**
Oftentimes, organizations and managers don’t get the behavior they want from employees because they simply don’t talk about it or emphasize it enough. Managers often expect employees to read their minds and/or pick up on subtle indirect cues.

You can’t over-communicate about the behavior you expect from your employees and the behavior that you don’t want to see in your workplace. Make sure expected behavior is documented and visible to all employees. They need to know what behaviors you expect and want to see from them. The more you talk about it and the more direct you are with what you want from your employees, the more likely you are to get it.

Communicate expectations for behavior and conduct in your employee handbook, in staff communications, and in-person – constantly – starting at the top and continuously emphasized at the line-manager level. Measure and evaluate these behaviors in the performance management process. In addition, clearly communicate the consequences of not behaving in the expected manner.

3. **Model the behaviors you want to see.**
Employees generally follow the example that is set by others in the organization and take cues for how to behave from those in charge. Leaders must accept their responsibility to act in accord with the behaviors they want employees to exude each and every day. They must be the behavioral models.

We learn to do what’s right by following others who do what’s right, and similarly, we learn to do what’s wrong when those we follow do wrong. Employees are more likely to behave in the ways you want when your leaders do.
Behind every behavior you don’t want in the workplace (or absence of behavior that you do want) is a cause, a motive, or a feeling.

can’t have two sets of behavioral expectations in a workplace. Like good parents do with their children, everyone in a supervisory or leadership role must “parent” their work group by setting the example and guiding good behavior.

4. Be observant: Pay attention to behavior.
Observe and monitor employees’ behavior. Every day, there are behavioral cues you should pay attention to in order to manage and lead others more effectively. As managers, it’s your responsibility to keep your eyes and ears open to make sure that this behavior aligns with what the organization needs and expects, and to make sure it is corrected if it isn’t.

Accountability for behavior is a major problem in many organizations, but people must be held accountable for how they behave in the workplace, and managers of all levels need to make sure this happens by paying attention to and addressing behavior issues.

5. Reinforce the right behaviors.
People will typically repeat behaviors that are rewarded and not repeat behaviors that aren’t. When you want to see more of a behavior in the workplace, acknowledge and recognize it. At times, you may even consider rewarding it, depending on the action.

When you want to see less of a behavior, provide direct, constructive feedback about it so the employee understands what’s wrong, and certainly, depending on the severity of the behavior, applying discipline may be necessary.

In addition, always confront and deal with behavior head-on and fairly with your employees. Negative behavior change strategies like passive aggressiveness, bullying, underhanded methods, and “testing” employees are never appropriate or effective means of getting the behaviors you want, but unfortunately sometimes occur in the workplace. These can be very hurtful and unfair tactics that do more harm than good, create distrust, break down relationships, and fail to respect your employees.

6. Understand the cause and motive.
Behind every behavior you don’t want in the workplace (or absence of behavior that you do want) is a cause, a motive, or a feeling. That doesn’t always justify the behavior, but it does affect how you deal with it.

Maybe it’s insecurity, fear, wanting to please someone, a personal problem, or lack of knowledge/skill. Employees’ motives tend to be very “human,” and a reminder that we are all imperfect. Whatever the cause, motive, or feeling driving an employee’s behavior, managing and helping employees correct it entails listening, understanding, and empathizing to some degree with whatever is driving the employee to not behave in the manner you’d like.

7. Respond to behavior consistently.
Be extremely consistent in your reinforcement and enforcement of behaviors. Telling employees you want them to display a specific behavior, and then punishing or disciplining them for the behavior sends confusing and mixed messages.

8. Inspire others.
Inspiration is one of the most effective ways to change behavior. To inspire is to tap into employees’ motivations and passions at a much deeper level. It can entail sharing stories, using inspiring language and communication tactics, personally or emotionally connecting with employees, using positive motivational techniques like encouragement and empowerment, and building confidence and self-esteem.

Managers who can connect with employees on a different level and inspire them to change their behavior can generally achieve more behavior change than those who can’t.

Employee behavior in the workplace is complex and difficult to change sometimes. If we want employees to behave in a certain manner, then we need to make sure that we are managing them and the workplace in a way that supports, encourages, and holds them accountable for those behaviors. And most importantly, as we try to influence and change our employees’ behavior in the workplace, we should try to use positive means such as reinforcement, communication, inspiration, empathy, understanding, and behavior modeling to achieve our end goal.

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Beyond the Press Release: How to Effectively Use Other Tactics to Get Media Attention

By Missy Henriksen
Executive Director, PPMA

The profile of a company, engaging its current and prospective audiences and addressing unplanned news or a crisis, among other things. Since public relations’ establishment as a professional discipline in the early 20th century, press releases have been the primary tool to disseminate news to appropriate news media. However, the proliferation of social media, shrinking newsrooms and a change in how people consume and share news, requires out-of-the-box thinking more often than not if a company is hoping to stand out from the rest and have themselves or their product noticed.

Here are several key tactics the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA), the consumer education arm of the NPMA, has employed over the years to achieve media relations success, gain attention for the industry and increase awareness among consumers.

The Element of Surprise
Each day, members of the media receive hundreds of pitch emails from across the country and many of them never even get read. In order to stand out from the crowd, companies and their public relations representatives must find ways to cut through the clutter. Each year, PPMA does just that with annual press mailings, which have included a viewfinder, a dartboard and a pest-proofing kit to name a few.

In 2010, the PPMA had one of its boldest ideas translate into a major media success. The organization outfitted five 4-foot tall dollhouses with plastic pests such as cockroaches, rodents, bed bugs and stinging insects, and called out key statistics about each pest. The dollhouses were then hand-delivered to select national media: “TODAY show,” “The Rachael Ray Show,” “Good Morning America,” “Dr. Oz” and “Fox & Friends” in order to illustrate that even a dream house can become a nightmare with pests.

This “Dream House” mailing was billed as a fun way for the media to discuss this important and not always most popular topic with a relatable visual. Within 30-minutes of delivering the unexpected dream house, “The Rachel Ray Show” producers called and asked for the exclusive. This innovative approach to a “press mailing” resulted in a custom dollhouse set design and comprehensive 15-minute segment, worth more than $2.4M in ad value and nearly 4 million impressions for NPMA.

Using Special Observances to Raise the Industry’s Profile
On any given day or month there are a special observances calling attention to a disease, a cause, an organization, etc. These daily, weekly and monthly designations can be used to promote a particular industry or cause through public relations efforts.

Each April, PPMA has done just that with National Pest Management Month and in 2013 created two additional industry-related weeks, Termite Awareness Week (TAW) and Bed Bug Awareness Week (BBAW). For more than 30 years, National Pest Management Month (NPMM) has recognized the invaluable role professional pest management plays in protecting public health, food and property. Every year during the month of April, PPMA works to educate the American public about the positive impact professional pest control has on everyone’s quality of life through several media tactics.
Most recently, NPMM along with TAW (in March) and BBAW (in April) were formally recognized in the Chase’s Calendar of Events, the most comprehensive and authoritative reference available on special events, holidays, federal and state observances, historic anniversaries and more. In addition to press releases for all three designations and a targeted media blitz, PPMA used its consumer-facing social media channels to turn the conversations to NPMM/TAW/BBAW through specific posts, photos, videos, etc. Additionally, BBAW was used to publish the most recent results of the “Bugs Without Borders” survey.

As a result of this media outreach, NPMA was featured on The Weather Channel, BobVila.com, Forbes.com, Yahoo! Homes, as well as in articles in The Washington Post, The Miami Herald, South Florida Sun-Sentinel and syndicated in a number of newspapers across the country.

In addition to these designations, there are several others, on the national and state levels, that may have a tie-in with the professional pest management industry, such as National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month in May or National Homeownership Month in June. Companies can use these special observances as a timely way to tie in their own topical news.

“Newsjacking”
“Newsjacking” is a term that many public relations professionals have become very fond of and have utilized with great results. Simply put, “newsjacking” uses current news stories to cultivate one’s own news and become part of the bigger story.

In 2010, bed bugs made a huge national reappearance when they were found in several retail stores in New York City. PPMA immediately got in on the story by pitching NPMA spokespeople to speak on the resurgence, bed bug biology, treatment, prevention tips, and also unveiled the results of the industry’s first “Bugs Without Borders” survey. This tactic translated to multiple appearances on “Today,” “The Early Show,” as well as numerous newspaper interviews with USA Today, The Washington Post, The New York Times and other daily newspapers. More recently, PPMA became a media source on the emergence of the 17-year cicadas, as well as the “Polar Vortex” weather phenomenon, helping to educate consumers about how the deep freeze will have an effect on pest populations come spring.

Weather conditions, unusual pests and odd and unusual pest-related stories are all the types of topics that make news and present themselves as perfect newsjacking opportunities which can yield positive media results.

Use Visuals
They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and that couldn’t be more true today with the rise of social media. Research shows that visual content on these platforms engages more consumers than text alone. Photos are shared two times more than text only updates.
and our brains simply process visual content faster than text. Pinterest’s meteoric rise to popularity is based on that premise alone.

One of the best ways to add the visual component to a press release is to include an infographic. Infographics are a great way to present research, share new product information or simply tell a story through visual means. According to the social network Digg, use of infographics on the platform have increased by 250 times in the past 5 years and infographic searches have jumped by 800 percent in the past 2 years. Using this visual tool can result in greater shareability, media pick up and interest from a wide audience and position a company as an expert on a particular topic, more so than a press release alone.

PPMA has begun to use infographics on a regular basis to illustrate survey results, unusual statistics and facts in the easy-to-read and publish format and regularly posts photos and videos to its social media channels to increase engagement.

Go One-On-One
Constantly churning out press releases and seeing what sticks is never a good media relations strategy. Some announcements require more finesse and strategic thinking. Companies will be better served by cultivating relationships with specific reporters, carefully researching who covers certain topics, what type of stories they write, how best to contact them and then reaching out to them with a customized pitch email and phone call. A personalized pitch will always be more effective at getting a reporter’s attention than constantly inundating them with generic press releases.

However, it is still important to find a way to stand out and bring value to these relationships. One of the simplest ways to do so is to go back to basics and invite members of the media for a face-to-face meeting. Discussion between two people without a phone or screen between them can lead to great story ideas and conversation. A company can find out what story angles interest the reporter most and how they can work with them on future angles. It also puts a face to a name or email address and will ensure that future pitches and releases are opened instead of moved to the trash.

This is a tactic PPMA has done over the years to help maintain and cultivate relationships with certain reporters. Recently the group has begun offering to bring live specimens (all safely contained) in its Bug Zoo to the deskside meetings as many reporters have not always seen common and unusual pests, let alone pests so up close and personal. Not all reporters say yes, but the ones that have are very curious, interested, and perhaps grossed out just enough to write a story. Consider bringing live (contained!) bugs, infestation pictures taken out in the field, case studies and the like to help boost credibility and leave a lasting impression with reporters.

The Bottom Line
Going beyond a press release by taking key pieces of an announcement, story or even tips and sharing it via social media, with the use of visual tools or reaching out to reporters in a unique and well-researched way can go a long way in getting a company in the news – more so than just pushing send on a press release via email or a wire service. When done properly, packaging content in innovative and interesting ways that caters to the target media and consumer audiences can position a company for success – it just takes some time, creativity and public relations know-how.
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This fall I was inspecting a house and found this strange spiral structure on a doorframe. What is it and should I worry about it?

This spiral is made up of green lacewing eggs, 53 of them to be exact! Each narrow stalk is about 1/3 of an inch long and has an egg at the tip. Eggs are usually laid on the undersides of leaves and other surfaces, so the eggs hang down. Not only is this impressive looking, but it is also an effective way to limit predation by other insects. In addition, the stalks are thought to contain chemicals that specifically discourage predation by ants.

Green lacewings are in the order Neuroptera and the family Chrysopidae. They are characterized by having a slender body with large, membranous wings that are held roof-like over their body at rest. If you have ever spent time looking at insects gathered around a light outside, you have likely seen lacewings flying about. Lacewings are not a major concern, unless they are entering structures and bothering homeowners. In fact, green lacewings are considered beneficial insects due to their predatory behavior.

What does a harsh winter do to insect populations?

A harsh winter, like the one we are in the midst of, can’t help insect populations. Freezing causes ice crystals to form in the body, which rupture cells during expansion and can cause severe cellular damage or death. Accordingly, a winter with periods of hard freeze and thaws are thought to be more effective at killing overwintering insects than a consistently cold winter due to the repeated formation of ice crystals.

Despite all the challenges, insects have developed an impressive variety of strategies to deal with snow and freezing temperatures so the impact may not be as great as you might suspect. Overwintering insects survive the extremes by avoiding freezing (by migrating, entering warm houses, or burrowing below the freezing depth) or tolerate freezing (some insects synthesize ‘antifreeze’, enter diapause, or by burrowing into leaf litter, soil, and bark). One common method for surviving a winter is the way the life cycle of an insect is situated seasonally. For many species, adults do not survive the winter, however, hardy eggs are laid in the fall and can remain viable until they hatch in the spring.

Snow cover can provide good insulation and help keep insects at higher temperatures than the ambient air temperatures. Additionally, insects native to places with cold winters are more likely to have adaptations present behaviorally or biologically to help them survive. In warmer climates, hard freezes do kill many insects, perhaps due to rarity of this kind of weather coupled with the lack of snow cover.

Another factor to consider is the health of insect predators. How well are the birds, mammals, and reptiles that prey on insects surviving this harsh winter? Additionally, how are the plants and invertebrates that insects feed on during the rest of the year faring? As you can see, this is a very complicated question. In general, cold winters will typically produce lower insect numbers than mild winters, but it is not 100% certain.

Can my bed bug scent detection canine detect the presence of other insects related to bed bugs like bat bugs or swallow bugs?

The short answer is maybe, but it’s a complicated issue. When a bed bug scent detection dog is initially trained and throughout the ongoing training process, canines must be “proofed” off of distracting odors. Proofing refers to the process of training a canine to “ignore” odors that are not the target. For instance, a handler might begin to “alert” on other odors that are frequently encountered in association with bed bug infestations. Handlers have to be aware of this potential and be vigilant in recognizing it, then training the dog to ignore everything but the odor of bed bugs. (Keep in mind that canine scent detection is a complicated process and should be done in consultation with an experienced and qualified trainer.)

But here’s where it gets confusing. It’s not clear exactly what odor (or odors) a trained scent detection canine is detecting. They might be detecting a single odor, or a suite of odors associated with bed bugs. Other closely related insects may share similar chemical
combinations with bed bugs. Diligent trainers carefully
proof canines off of other insect odors that are
commonly encountered during searches to ensure that
the potential for false positive alerts are minimized. So
the answer to your question, can your canine detect
the presence of other insects closely related to bed bugs,
is maybe. The only way to know for sure is to test the
scent detection team with these other odors, then proof
the canine off of odors that might be distracting them
from the task of finding bed bugs.

Q: I am preparing to take the Associate Certified
Entomologist (ACE) exam thorough the
Entomological Society of America. How do I prepare?

Congratulations, obtaining the Associate Certified
Entomologist designation is a great way to
differentiate yourself and your company from
the competition. The ACE designation was developed
by ESA as a way to certify professionals who are working
in the field of urban entomology. Beginning in 2014,
a revised and updated exam was introduced, and a list
of topics and suggested reference materials are listed
on the ESA’s certification website www.entocert.org.

NPMA has entered into a strategic partnership
with ESA and is developing online resources to help
members prepare and review for the exam. Online
training can be accessed through the NPMA Online
Learning Center. Available topics include:
- Filth Breeding and Nuisance Flies
- Mosquitoes and Biting Flies
- Solitary Bees and Wasps
- Social Bees and Wasps
- Termites
- Cockroaches
- New topics are added frequently

These online training programs serve as a
comprehensive review of material that might be
included on the exam and should be considered
an important part of your preparation. They should
not be relied on as a single source of study material.
Keep in mind that it’s always better to over-prepare
for an exam, studying all of the suggested resources.
Good luck!
T he Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA), NPMA’s consumer and media outreach arm, created National Pest Management Month (April), Termite Awareness Week (March 16-22), and Bed Bug Awareness Week (April 20-26) to enable the public to learn more about the work industry professionals do to protect health, food, and property from the dangers and diseases of pests – and learn more about the insects themselves. This year these occasions will once again be recognized by Chase’s Calendar of Events, the world’s foremost authority on observances and celebrations. Additionally, PPMA has been working with various state associations to encourage Governors’ offices around the country to recognize Pest Management Month within their states.

With all these wheels in motion bringing attention to the industry, how will you capitalize on the added business focus? Unfortunately, for many busy offices, the important task of connecting to these marketing-oriented events is often overshadowed by urgent priorities that surface. If your office hasn’t identified how to jump on the marketing bandwagon provided by these events, here are ideas to jumpstart your brainstorming.

General
- Develop flyers or brochures that technicians can leave with current and prospective customers
- Issue a company press release calling attention to any – or all three – of these observances
- Call attention to these events on your company’s home page

For Termite Awareness Week
- Call attention to problematic species in your region, use company call statistics, customer stories if possible, offer tips
- Post only termite-related posts to your Twitter feed
- Use the hashtag #TermiteWeek in all posts and interactions.
- Devote your Facebook page to termites for the week

For National Pest Management Month
- Use company information to illustrate the positive role of professional pest management in society; outline specific examples your company has handled (as appropriate)
- Mention the NPMM designation during media interactions during the month of April to underscore role of pest professionals in regards to household pests
- Invite your Facebook fans and Twitter followers to share stories about help they’ve received from their pest professionals
- If possible, use direct quotes from your customers in their tweets and Facebook posts to illustrate how pest professionals help consumers
- Host an open house or some kind of community event

For Bed Bug Awareness Week
- Post only bed bug information on your Twitter page
- Seek out those who have mentioned bed bugs in their tweets and engage them in conversation
- Use the hashtag #BedBugWeek in all posts and interactions
- Convert your Facebook page to a bed bug hub for the week. Post bed bug related posts, news, photos, videos and focus your fan engagement on sharing bed bug information/stories
- Create a milestone/favorite post on the page

PPMA Guardians and Contributors will find complete turnkey marketing collateral, including suggested social media posts, on PPMATools.org. The opportunities are endless. Let us know what you come up with!
LAUNCH MOSQUITO CONTROL SERVICES WITH ZOËCON

With municipal budgets shrinking and vector borne disease a concern, more people are turning to professionals for mosquito control. Applying Mavrik® Perimeter, Zenivex™ E4 RTU adulticide, and Altosid® larvicide from Zoëcon Professional Products can control mosquitoes from larvae to adults. For more information about Zoëcon® mosquito control and a list of distributors, visit zoecon.com/mosquitoes or call 800.248.7763.
Without question, the hottest pest management regulatory issue these days is protecting bees from unintended exposure to pesticides. Recently adopted and future public policy will impact pesticide use patterns for all user groups including pest management professionals (PMPs).

Honeybees and other pollinators are vital to an abundant food supply. Over the last several years, however, honeybees have been plagued by the mysterious Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), and beekeepers throughout the world are now fighting for their livelihoods. Some have suggested that the primary culprit is pesticides, while others have stressed the complexity of the issue and the variety of factors involved.

Recent EPA Action
Nothing better underscores the urgency of the bee health issue than the mid-August announcement by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that labels of some neonicotinoid pesticide products would be revised to prohibit applications where bees are present. The changes apply to all products that have outdoor foliar use directions (except granulars) containing the active ingredients imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin or thiamethoxam regardless of formulation, concentration, or intended user. The new language that will appear in the Directions for Use section on non-agricultural product labels states "Do not apply [insert name of product] while bees are foraging. Do not apply [insert name of product] to plants that are flowering. Only apply after all flower petals have fallen off." A bee icon to highlight the significance of the label change will accompany the new language. A Pollinator Advisory Box containing voluntary best management practices will also appear on product labels. New labels will appear on products early this year. This label revision is likely the first in a series of label changes aimed at protecting bees.

While EPA’s recent label change is perhaps the highest profile action to limit bee exposure to pesticides, it simply caps off a myriad of worldwide activity over the last year.

Other Notable Recent Regulatory/Legislative Activity
One year ago, in early March 2013, EPA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) hosted a Pollinator Summit to bring stakeholders together and to learn about current research, new technologies, best practices and other stewardship activities to protect bees from unnecessary pesticide exposure. The discussion focused almost exclusively on agricultural pesticide use, especially dust in agricultural planting operations in which pesticide-coated seeds are used.

In late April 2013, the European Commission adopted a moratorium on the use of three neonicotinoid insecticides - clothianidin, imidacloprid, and thiamethoxam - in the 27 European Union countries. The restrictions, which went into effect
on December 1, 2013, prohibit seed treatments, soil applications and foliar treatments on bee-attractive plants and cereals. Manufacturers of the products have since lodged legal challenges against the suspensions.

Soon after the European Commission approved the moratorium, USDA and EPA issued a report finding that multiple factors are contributing to the declining honeybee population, including parasites, poor nutrition, a lack of genetic diversity, and pesticides. The study did not find sufficient evidence to warrant a ban on neonicotinoid pesticides in the United States and instead identified the Varroa mite as "the single most detrimental pest of honeybees."

Until this past summer, the bee health issue was almost completely agriculturally oriented with almost all of the discussion centered on how to better protect managed bee colonies. However, that changed one late June morning last year when an Oregon pesticide applicator used a dinotefuran product to treat 55 linden trees encircling a suburban Portland shopping center for black vine weevils and aphids, an application that killed up to 59,000 bumblebees and other pollinators.

Almost immediately afterward the Oregon Department of Agriculture suspended for 180 days (from June 27–December 24, 2013) the use of 18 dinotefuran products labeled for applications on landscape trees and shrubs, nursery and greenhouse plans, turfgrass, forests and agricultural crops.

Media reports about the Oregon incident characterized the treatment as a "misapplication." Yet, the label language in question states that the product should not be applied or allowed to drift to blooming crops or weeds if bees are visiting the treatment area. The application was performed very early in the day, before bees were active. So the question authorities and perhaps a judge must answer: are linden trees in a parking lot a crop or weed?

The Oregon incident precipitated a late July letter from EPA to all of the registrants of products containing imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin and thiamethoxam directing the submission of additional information about their products. The bee kill also triggered the introduction of legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives suspending the use of several neonicotinoid pesticides. Although introduced by liberal Democratic Congressmen John Conyers (D-MI) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), by late September last year the Save America’s Pollinators Act had attracted the support of almost 30 fellow House members including a conservative Tennessee Republican.

Additionally, a draft report accompanying legislation funding EPA’s operations for Fiscal Year 2014 directs EPA to adopt a comprehensive assessment process that considers the risk of pesticides to honey bees, bumble bees, and solitary bees in all life stages and encourages the Agency take appropriate regulatory action to protect bees from pesticides.

In other state level activity, the New Jersey Legislature is considering a measure that bans the use, sale, offer for sale or promotional purposes, or distribution of any neonicotinoid pesticide. The General Assembly of Puerto Rico is considering similar legislation. The Vermont Legislature previously debated such a bill. Last July, the Washington Department of Agriculture rejected a request from Thurston County commissioners — acting at the behest of the Olympia Beekeeper’s Association — to ban homeowners from purchasing neonicotinoid pesticides.

Last September, Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency announced protective measures it plans to implement before the 2014 growing season. Since few neonicotinoid pesticides are registered for PMP uses in Canada the recent announcement won’t have much immediate impact on Canadian PMPs, although the recent action probably decreases the likelihood of the registration of neonicotinoid products for perimeter treatments in the foreseen future.

Activist groups have termed the recent decline in bee health "a second Silent Spring" and have lobbied officials from President Obama to Members of Congress to EPA officials about the issue. The groups have sued EPA in federal district court alleging that the Agency failed to adequately protect pollinators from neonicotinoid pesticides and are also urging big box retailers to stop selling neonicotinoid pesticides.

Take Home Message
So what is the meaning of all of the efforts to limit unintended exposure to bees for PMPs. Below are a few take home messages:
1. The bee health issue is not a short-term issue and EPA’s label changes should be viewed as the first of what will likely be multiple steps to safeguard bees from pesticide exposure.

2. Regulatory action will eventually extend to non-neonicotinoid pesticides as well. In fact, last July, the European Commission voted to restrict the use of fipronil. Expect the label language that will appear on neonicotinoid product labels this year to eventually appear on other products as well.

3. The public is deeply interested and concerned about pollinator health, so the story is likely to continue to receive widespread media coverage. In fact, pesticides’ role in declining bee health was the subject of an August 19, 2014 Time Magazine cover story. Regardless of whether PMPs are using neonicotinoids or other pesticide products, they should avoid unnecessarily exposing bees to pesticides, unless bees are the intended target for structural or public health reasons.

Q&A: GETTING READY FOR CHANGES TO NEONICOTINOID LABELS WITH OUTDOOR FOLIAR USES

What active ingredients are affected?
Imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin, thiamethoxam.

What uses are affected and what is NPMA doing about it?
EPA has said that the new language only applies to products that have “foliar” uses. Foliar generally refers to pesticide applications made to leaves. NPMA is working through SFIREG and ASPCRO, organizations comprised of state pesticide regulators, to obtain a guidance document from EPA, which will address some common questions and provide greater clarity to PMPs using these products, to include:

1. Clarification that this language does not prohibit or limit indoor, termite or perimeter treatments
2. That the new “bee box” is only advisory and not mandatory, enforceable label language
3. What “bees are foraging” means
4. That the term “bee” refers to honey bees, bumble bees and carpenter bees, but does not include wasps or Africanized honey bees

When will the new labels appear?
Products released for shipment after February 28th must bear the new labeling.

You should start seeing the first updated labels this spring, however since there is no way to know when the new language to protect pollinators will begin arriving on containers from your distributor, it is important to carefully review the label and any associated labeling material each time a new imidacloprid, dinotefuran, clothianidin, thiamethoxam container is opened for use.

In addition, EPA recently informed us that some manufacturers have removed uses from their labels due to the new restrictions. Thus, it is critical that in addition to looking for the new label restrictions, you also need to ensure the Directions for Use still includes the site to which you will be applying the product.

Are any of the labels I use changing?
If the product has outdoor foliar uses on the label; yes, changes will be made to the directions for use. The directions will now read,

Do not apply [insert name of product] while bees are foraging. Do not apply [insert name of product] to plants that are flowering. Only apply after all flower petals have fallen off.

This language will be accompanied by a bee icon in a red diamond to alert you to the label change. The icon should also remind you to consider any foraging bees before choosing the product if there are flowering plants in the area to be treated.

When do I have to start complying with the new labels?
The label is the law. So, as soon as the product container you are using displays the updated language, you are required to comply with the new directions for use.

Can I use neonics for a perimeter treatment?
Yes, you may apply a perimeter treatment using neonics. Before you treat, however, look for flowering plants that could indicate foraging bees may be present. If bees are present, be sure to take steps to minimize exposure of the product to bees and other insect pollinators.
If bees are on the label, is it permissible to still use the product?
As long as you are not treating plants that are flowering while bees are foraging, then yes, it is still permissible to use the product.

Bees are important to my family and me. Are there actions I can take to protect bees beyond what is on the label?
There are lots of things you can do.
- Continue to use integrated pest management techniques for control of pests
- Practice good product and bee stewardship
- Be more aware if bees are in or near the area requiring treatment. If bees are present, and you don’t need to treat plants that are flowering, but you feel a neonicotinoid is the best product choice for control of the pest, consider making the application during the early morning hours or late evening when bees are less likely to come in contact with or be affected by your treatment.
- Educate homeowners about the benefits of pollinators and the proactive steps your company is taking to reduce risk to pollinators

What steps do you recommend for my company?
- Review the new product labels
- Review and revise service protocols as necessary
- Provide training to technicians regarding the changes in labels and service protocols others?

What does science actually say about neonicotinoids and their impact on bees?
EPA and USDA issued a report in 2012 that suggested factors influencing bee health may include “disease, arthropod pests [parasitic mites], pesticides, poor nutrition and beekeeping practices.” They identified the varroa mite as “the single most detrimental pest of honey bees and can magnify the role of viruses.” Most scientists agree that declining bee health is a result of multiple factors.

A Pollinator Advisory Box was mentioned in the article. Do you know what this will look like?

Protection of Pollinators (see box above)

APPLICATION RESTRICTIONS EXIST FOR THIS PRODUCT BECAUSE OF RISK TO BEES AND OTHER INSECT POLLINATORS. FOLLOW APPLICATION RESTRICTIONS FOUND IN THE DIRECTIONS FOR USE TO PROTECT POLLINATORS.

Look for the bee hazard icon in the directions for use for each application site for specific use restrictions and instructions to protect bees and other insect pollinators.
This product can kill bees and other insect pollinators.

Bees and other insect pollinators will forage on plants when they flower, shed pollen, or produce nectar. Bees and other insect pollinators can be exposed to this pesticide from:

- Direct contact during foliar applications, or contact with residues on plant surfaces after foliar applications
- Ingestion of residues in nectar and pollen when the pesticide is applied as a seed treatment, soil, tree injection, as well as foliar applications.

When Using This Product Take Steps To:

- Minimize exposure of this product to bees and other insect pollinators when they are foraging on pollinator attractive plants around the application site.
- Minimize drift of this product on to beehives or to off-site pollinator attractive habitat. Drift of this product onto beehives or off-site to pollinator attractive habitat can result in bee kills.
- Information on protecting bees and other insect pollinators may be found at the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship website.

Pesticide incidents (for example, bee kills) should immediately be reported to the state/tribal lead agency. For contact information for your state, go to: http://www.aapco.org/officials.html. Pesticide incidents should also be reported to the National Pesticide Information Center.
The NPMA Board of Directors has ratified the candidates recommended by the NPMA Nominating Committee for the national offices of the Board of Directors.

The following is a list of board nominees for 2014-2015.

**Secretary**

The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording and distribution of all minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Membership, and declaring a quorum for the respective meetings.

J. Bryan Cooksey, III, McCall Service, Inc., Jacksonville, Florida

**Regional Directors**

One Regional Candidate from Each of the Following NPMA Regions:

**Region Two:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virgin Islands
- Burns Blackwell, Terminix Company, Greensboro, North Carolina
- Court Parker, Bug Busters, Inc., Winder, Georgia

**Region Three:** Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, Wyoming
- Carrie Thibodeaux, Sprague Pest Solutions, Tacoma, Washington
- Richard Kesecker, Good Earth Pest Company, Corvallis, Oregon

**At-Large Directors**

Five (5) At-Large Candidates (not regionally specific)

- Robert Baker, Clark Pest Control, Lodi, California
- Michael Botha, Sandwich Isle Pest Solutions, Pearl City, Hawaii
- Cleveland Dixon, Holiday Termite and Pest Control, Springfield, Virginia
- Richard Ennis, The Steritech Group, Inc., Charlotte, North Carolina
- Andrew Klein, Assured Environments, New York, New York
- Chris McCloud, McCloud Services, South Elgin, Illinois
- Deni Naumann, Copesan Services, Inc., Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin
- Emily Thomas, Arrow Exterminators, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia
- Ben Walker, Gregory Pest Solutions, Greenville, South Carolina

**Past President Representative**

Raleigh Jenkins, ABC Home & Commercial Services, Houston, Texas

The Board of Directors election will be held this Spring, and, for the first time, NPMA is offering online voting. (To ensure you have the opportunity to vote, please make sure we have your proper email. Contact npma@pestworld.org if you need to update your information.) Please do not hesitate to contact npma@pestworld.org if you have questions.
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE OR OTHER NPMA EVENTS, PLEASE VISIT WWW.NPMAPESTWORLD.ORG.

MARCH 9–11, 2014
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SEEKING: THE MOST PASSIONATE PROFESSIONAL IN THE PEST MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY!

Are you the proudest professional in the pest management industry? Does your excitement in and dedication to your career allow you to better serve your customers? Does your skill and fondness for protecting public health and property from unwanted pests go above and beyond the competition? If so, we have just the contest for you. The National Pest Management Association (NPMA) is seeking the most passionate employee in our industry. We want to know why you like doing what you do, what your favorite parts of the job are and how you have risen to new heights because of opportunities available to your as a pest professional!

Submit a video showing us why this industry is a great place to work, why you love your job, and how you have benefitted from working in pest management and you’ll be entered to win a trip to PestWorld 2014!*

Visit www.npmapestworld.org/pestatfactor2014 to enter today!

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