



*Robert J. Elsdon*

Robert J. Elsdon, RRO  
President

# The GOLDEN Rule

Summer is here, and thoughts of the season can conjure up expectations of specific traditions that we often look forward to.

Depending on where one lives, summer weather can bring welcoming warmth or possibly unbearable humidity. Particularly in areas that have four specifically defined seasons, summer tends to be welcomed with open arms. For others, summer may be the time to look for cool breezes elsewhere.

No, I am not supplementing my income as a part-time weather forecaster. I just want to point out that we often experience similar circumstances and conditions but view them and deal with them in totally different ways. That is not to say that my way is better than yours or vice versa. We often simply ingest experience and process similar conditions only to react to them vastly differently.

How we react in times of adversity is very important. We can hide our heads in the sand, deny any responsibility, refuse to discuss the problem, point fingers, take the offensive approach, take the defensive approach, or pack up and get out of Dodge.

The problem with reacting as described above is that the issue seldom vanishes and, in fact, usually grows exponentially, based on the degree of one's inaction.

One of many things I learned from running a business for almost 30 years is that we will make mistakes or our employees will make mistakes. As owners, we must take

responsibility and react properly to mitigate further damages to the project and to mitigate the potential for damage to our corporate and/or personal reputations.

Over the years, I have gauged roofing contractors, not by whether they made mistakes but by how they dealt with their mistakes. The companies that made the aftermath of a mistake more irritating than the mistake itself did not last long on my preferred vendor list and received little assistance from our firm toward resolution.

By using this philosophy of how contractors reacted differently to similar circumstances and how I, in turn, reacted to the contractor, our firm soon realized that dealing with a disappointed client without delay was much easier than dealing with a frustrated and irate client who had been put off for weeks. As a matter of fact, our clients often appreciated our admission of culpability to the point where they, in fact, assisted us in corrective measures or lessened their contractual expectations to lighten our load. If we treat our clients as we would wish them to treat us, we will quite possibly earn clients for life. And the clients that don't treat us properly can have the opportunity to work with our competitors.

Question: Is the CEO of BP on the *Interface* circulation list?

Regards,  
Bob Elsdon