



## EXPERIENCE IS THE KEY

Wikipedia defines the term "experience" as "the knowledge or mastery of an event or subject gained through involvement in or exposure to it." In the construction and landscaping industries, there is little argument about the importance of experience for insuring that the job is done correctly and on time.

Recently we polled the employees at Zenere to satisfy a curiosity regarding the amount of experience they have. We were pleasantly surprised at the numbers that started coming in. Ten employees in the office alone had over 20 years of experience in the industry. Three employees had 28 years and three had over 40 years!

It has been said that, "Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test first and the lesson afterward." The seasoned veterans at Zenere have earned their stripes through the years by facing a multitude of situations - both good and bad - and discovering the best ways to deal with those situations and still come out on top.

Before he passed away, Steve Jobs said something that has since become an often-repeated quote. "We don't hire smart people so we can tell them what to do. We hire smart people so they can tell us what to do!"

Zenere experience is a free bonus that comes with any Zenere service. Customers can be sure that their projects are in the hands of people who know what they are doing.

## WHY SHOULD DAD WORK SAFELY?

### ESSAY CONTEST!

We want to hear from the children of our machine operators! Why should Dad work safely?

Kids, send us a short essay or a hand-drawn picture of your reasons for dad's safety. At Zenere, safety is a way of life and we never want anyone to forget it. This little contest is a way to hear from the younger generation regarding their concern for a safe work environment.

Send all submissions to [karl@zenerecompanies.com](mailto:karl@zenerecompanies.com). Winners and prizes will be announced in our next newsletter in August.



## CONSTRUCTION JOKE OF THE MONTH

Three contractors were touring the White House on the same day. One was from New York, another from Missouri, and the third from Florida. At the end of the tour, the guard asked them what they did for a living. When they each replied that they were contractors, the guard said, "Hey we need one of the rear fences redone. Why don't you guys take a look at it and give me your bids."

First the Florida contractor took out his tape measure and pencil, did some measuring and said, "I figure the job will run about \$900 -- \$400 for materials, \$400 for my crew, and \$100 profit for me."

Next was the Missouri contractor. He also took out his tape measure and pencil, did some quick calculations and said, "Looks like I can do this job for \$700 -- \$300 for materials, \$300 for my crew, and \$100 profit for me."

Finally, the guard asks the New York contractor for his bid. Without batting an eye, the contractor says, "\$2,700."

The guard, incredulous, looks at him and says, "You didn't even measure like the other guys! How did you come up with such a high figure?"

"Easy," says the contractor from New York, "\$1,000 for me, \$1,000 for you, and we hire the guy from Missouri."

## FROM THE VP'S DESK....

Greetings Friends of the Zenere Companies,

It amazes me that we are already looking at the month of July on the calendar. It seems like we were dispatching snow plow crews only yesterday. Time is flying by and things are happening at such a rapid pace that it is difficult to keep up. Before more time gets away I want to take this opportunity to say hello and bring you some Zenere updates.

Like most businesses, Zenere has faced its share of challenges for the first half of 2015. The slow economy causes us to think twice before making any major decisions. On the other hand, much of what we are experiencing here relates to dealing with expansion and planning for the future. In the construction business we are forced to think ahead and Zenere is doing just that by making a large investment in technology, software, and personnel. We are excited about finding new ways to bring more efficiency and accuracy to our design and bidding processes, resulting in bigger savings to our customers.

At the same time, Zenere is doing its part to beautify the Midwest by providing landscape design and installation for shopping malls, manufacturing plants, restaurants, and other businesses. We are also using the heavy equipment at large landfills and new construction projects all over our area. Whatever the job may be, we're proud of the fact that we leave our sites looking far better than when we arrived.

Finally, please accept my sincere gratitude for being a part of our Zenere family. Whether you are a customer, a co-worker, or simply a friend, we are convinced that we could not do what we do without your generous support. It is my wish that the Zenere Companies maintain their solid reputation in our community and among our customers.

- Josh Zenere

## SHOP TALK

Behind every successful business is a group of employees whose work often goes unseen, yet is critical for keeping the day-to-day operations running smoothly.

For Zenere, the "shop" provides crucial behind-the-scenes services for a large fleet of equipment and accessories used on a daily basis. There are no projects taken on by the Zenere Companies that do not involve some sort of equipment - from the smallest snow shovel to the largest excavators.

Ron Croner, a veteran of over 40 years manages a dedicated crew of knowledgeable mechanics who handle the care and upkeep of a fleet that numbers in the hundreds.

Along with Ron, Ron Miller, Paul Pennington, and Jimmy Holmes deal with a landscape division that includes nearly 150 mowers, blowers, trucks, chainsaws, edgers, and brick saws. Of course, the landscape crews require

trucks and trailers to get where they are going.

The excavating division carries with it an even higher number of trucks, dozers, rollers, articulated trucks, water tankers, and excavators.

And we cannot forget the snow plow division with its fleet of rubber-tired loaders, trucks, snow plows, salt spreaders, and snow blowers.

Needless to say, there's a lot of work going on in the shop and Zenere could not get by without it. We tip our hats to these guys and give them a hearty thanks!



"Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him."

- Aldous Huxley

## Computer Tip of the Month

Been wondering about Windows 10? There has been a lot of buzz lately about this new Windows operating system. According to Microsoft, there will be many customers who are qualified to upgrade for free, while others (Windows XP users?) will pay \$119. Those upgrading for free, however, will probably need to start paying for use in 2016 - though that is still unclear.

But what will it be like? Many experts like to describe it as the best of Windows 7 and Windows 8 combined. Here are some of the new features:

- A new browser! Internet Explorer will be replaced by Microsoft "Edge".

- The old start menu is back!

- A new "action center" and "Cortana" - a digital assistant similar to Apple's Siri.

- Virtual Desktops. It will be possible to create different desktops and save them for use in appropriate situations.

Of course, the success of this new operating system remains to be seen, but since it combines the best of others - we give it a good chance.

## HOW WILL EL NIÑO AFFECT CHICAGO?

The surface water temps in the Pacific Ocean are telling us that El Niño is once again on its way. This could have some major effects on weather world-wide, including a shift in the weather patterns that could make the temperatures the hottest we've ever seen.

But just exactly how will it make a difference to those of us in the Midwest? We all remember the "polar vortex" winter of 2014 and our strong desires to move south! El Niño could change all of that with its promise to provide a

mild winter. Well known Chicago meteorologist Tom Skilling has been keeping an eye on this phenomenon and is confident that El Niño will make this winter far different than last. Of course, we may still get our share of snow!

The "hot" topic, of course, is climate change. However, we may be distracted by the more imminent and predictable patterns of El Niño for the time being. A warm winter may be nice, but seen in the context of global drought? - not so much.

## SAFETY SLOGANS OF THE MONTH

The Zenere Companies think a lot of safety and we make sure it is a commonly discussed topic. Here's a few ways to make talking safety a little bit more fun:

1. Follow the safety rules or you will be fired before you hit the ground.
2. In case of fire, exit building before tweeting about it.
3. You can't pick up your pay with no fingers.
4. While on a ladder, never step back to admire your work.
5. Electricity can kill you in spectacular ways.
6. Your wife will spend your 401k; If you get killed at work today.

7. Crushed hands or missing fingers may affect your golf swing.
8. If you aren't wearing your hard hat, bang head on brick repeatedly.
9. Protect only the fingers you want to keep.



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