The State of Arboriculture Consulting

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Consulting arborist...

• Full-time practice
• Part-time practice
  – Arborists with a full-time position who consult part-time
  – Supplemental income

Consulting arborist...

• Full-time practice
  – HortScience
  – Sole source of income

• “The only thing I have to sell is my time.”

Consulting arborist...

• Full-time practice
• Part-time practice
  – Service area
    – Tree care firm
    – May and may need not be profitable
Consulting arborist...

- Full-time practice
- Part-time practice
- Service area

Consulting arborist...

- What do consultants do?
  - Technical information & advice
  - Provide an opinion (Jim Qualife)

Consulting arborist...

- Services & markets (= clients)
- Skills needed

Consulting arborist...

- Services
  - Tree preservation planning
  - Tree health & structure assessment
  - Risk assessment
  - Tree & forest management plans
  - Plant problem diagnosis

Consulting arborist...

- Services
  - Plant palette evaluation
  - Appraisal
  - Soil, plant & water analysis
  - Expert witness
  - Training
  - Quality control (inspection)

Consulting arborist...

- Required skills...
  - Written & oral communication
  - Work well with others
  - Practical & pragmatic
Services

- Tree preservation
  - Surveys
  - Reports
  - Monitoring during construction
  - Developer & public agency
  - Primarily residential

Tree preservation: skills

- Philosophy
- Tree assessment
- Species response to impacts
- Ordinance & report requirements
- Read & understand plans
- Construction methods
- Responsive

Services

- Tree risk assessment
  - Structural assessment
  - One or thousands of trees
  - Ranking systems
  - Advanced inspections
  - Abatement treatments
  - Public outreach

Tree risk assessment: Skills

- Tree biomechanics
- Ranking systems
- Efficacy of abatement
- Decay detection & evaluation
- Species failure patterns

Services

- General consulting
  - Problem diagnosis
  - Appraisal
  - Soil & water analysis
  - Inspection of nursery stock
  - General aspects of tree management

General consulting: Skills

- Specific knowledge & experience
  - Plants
  - Soils
  - Pests
  - Appraisal
- Sampling & lab methods
- Results & interpretation
Services

- Expert witness
  - Advise in legal matters
  - Trial, arbitration, mediation
  - May or may not testify
  - May or may not prepare reports

Expert witness: Skills

- Written & oral communication
- Qualify as expert
- Thorough knowledge of field
- Adverse circumstances
  “Expert witnessing is a contact sport.”

Expert witness: Skills

- What do attorneys want?
- Jim Mangraviti, SEAK
  - Technical competence.
  - Communication skills.
  - Someone who can teach & persuade.
  - Availability.
  - Reliability.
  - Honesty.
  - Affordability.
  - Testifying skills.
  - Absence of credibility baggage.

Consulting arborist...

- Services & markets (= clients)
- Skills needed

Consulting arborist...

- Markets / service areas
- Development
  - Developers
  - Civil engineers
  - Landscape architects
  - Public agencies
Consulting arborist...

- Golf course
- Tree care company
- Homeowner’s Association (or Management Company)
- Homeowners
- Public Agencies
- Attorneys
- Insurance companies

Consulting arborist...

- How do I market my services to my target clients?
  - Direct
  - Indirect
  - Web & social media
  - Referrals

Consulting arborist...

- How do I market my services to my target clients?
  - Direct
  - Indirect
  - Web & social media

Consulting arborist...

- Expert witness
- How do attorneys find experts?
Consulting arborist...

- Expert witness
- How do attorneys find experts?
  - Referrals
  - Other cases
  - ASCA website
  - Universities
  - Authors
  - Expert referral / locating companies

Consulting arborist.....

- Type of business
- Services
- Skills
- Marketing

Consulting arborist.....my week

- Site meeting. Tree management plan.
- Team meeting. Presentation to City Executive Team. Urban Forest Master Plan.

Consulting arborist.....

- Site meeting. Tree management plan.
- Team meeting. Presentation to City Executive Team. Urban Forest Master Plan.
- Revise report. Tree assessment. Park site.
- Conference calls (3). Expert witness. 2 cases.
- Prepare 2 presentations for CTRP.
- Prepare 2 presentations for WTMS.
- Attend office meeting.
- Host scientist from Italy.
- Professional service (ASCA & other)

Consulting arborist...

- Academy
  - Ethics
  - Litigation / expert witness
  - Report preparation
  - Oral communication
  - Forensics

Consulting arborist...

- Academy
- Publications
  - Consultant’s quick start guide
  - Consultant’s legal guide
  - Business of consulting: The basics & beyond
  - Sample reports. R Carlson, ed.

www.asca-consultants.org
Consulting arborist...

- Academy
- Publications
- Registered Consulting Arborist
- Referral directory
- Listserv

www.asca-consultants.org

Consulting arborist...

- Ethics and professional practice...

“A field of philosophy that aims to clarify right from wrong, good and bad. Ethics tells us how we ought to behave.”

Ingram & Parks, 2002

Consulting arborist...

- Ethics and professional practice...

- Jim Rome....

“If you’re not cheating, you’re not trying.”

Consulting arborist...

- Ethics and professional practice...

- Steve Babitsky...

Ethics ....“the slippery slope to jail”

The only thing we have to offer as experts is our credibility. Don’t compromise this at any cost.

Consulting arborist...

- Ethics and professional practice...

- Larry Helms....

“Draw a line and live above it.”
Consulting arborist...

- **Ethics and professional practice...**
  
  - Larry Helms....
  
  1. **Discernment.** Knowing right from wrong.
  
  2. **Discipline.** Having the moral willpower to do it.

Consulting arborist...

- **Standards of professional practice**
  
  - Ethical principles
    - Competence
    - Due Care
    - Impartiality
    - Independence
    - Integrity
    - Objectivity
    - Public Trust

Consulting arborist...

- **ISA Certified Arborist Code of Ethics**

- **Responsibilities to:**
  
  - ISA, public, profession
  
  - Clients, employees, employers, public

Consulting arborist...

- **Responsibilities to:**
  
  - Clients, employees, employers, public
  
  - Performance of professional services
  
  - Conflicts of interest & impropriety
  
  - Public health & safety

Consulting arborist...

- Consultant provides on-call services to municipality over a period of years.
  
  - City-owned street tree fails and injures dog-walker.
  
  - Plaintiff’s attorney asks consultant to serve as expert witness.

Consulting arborist...

- Consultant asked to assess health & structural condition of tree.
  
  - Tree is fine.
  
  - Owner wants to remove tree to enhance view.
  
  - Can consultant prepare report describing the tree as being high risk of failure?
Consulting arborist...

- Consultant on a sidewalk repair project.

- Contractor (client) offers to compensate you with a percentage of the value of any change orders.

Consulting arborist...

- Consultant on construction project.
- Provide pruning specifications.
- Recommend contractor.
- Contractor goes directly to owner, suggesting additional tree care services, beyond my scope.

Consulting arborist.....

- Type of business
- Services
- Skills
- Marketing