

*Our market is very tight, and the competition for qualified staff is stiff. With some companies dangling signing bonuses and other perks in front of potential employees, how do I create a work environment that my staff won't want to leave? Or is it all about money?*

In the HME News Poll, July 2005 we were asked "...what is the number one reason why employees transitioned to or from your company?" Forty-eight percent (48%) said Better Work Environment while Thirty-one percent (31%) said More Money. These were the top two results and are indicative of what HME's are experiencing.

To create a work environment that all team members want to be a part of; you need to **SOW** in order to **reap**. That's right **SOW**; **S**urvey, **O**bserve, **W**ork

First; **S**urvey your team members and ask them what they would like to see in your work place. Ask about their workstation, the office space, vehicles, and warehouse. You may need to paint, buy some new desks and chairs and have the vans detailed every six months. Get as deep as you want with this survey, just keep it anonymous and be prepared to make some changes.

Second; **O**bserve the interaction of your team members. The work environment is not just about the space, it has a great deal to do with the people. Do your team members get along, is there conflict, and is there too much fun and not enough work? Observe your team working together. Be prepared to offer solutions to your teams needs.

Last you need to **W**ork in their space for just one day. We can only appreciate what our team members really experience if we walk or Work a mile in their shoes. You will surely gain a new realization of what your team members do for you and your customers.

You only reap if you SOW, if you choose not to SOW, your team may choose to GO.