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## **President's message: Remember to say thank you!**

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For many small and large companies in Mass. and across the nation, some of the more popular words being thrown around are "downsizing," "layoffs," or "streamlining." Unfortunately, these words are a reflection of the economic environment around us. Consumers are skeptical, lenders are gun-shy, and executives are nervous. Simply put, people everywhere lack confidence in the economy as well as their own bottom lines.

While it is easy to get caught up in the roller coaster ride that is our economic marketplace and become captives to a struggling economy, it is much harder to stop for a moment to try to put a shine on an old sneaker.

Despite all the gloom and doom that may be coming out of Washington D.C. and our local newspapers, companies should not take for granted the hard-working men and women they have been able to retain through a struggling economy.

Construction has been one of the industries hardest hit by the current recession. During times like these, it's important for leaders at companies of all sizes to thank their workforce for doing more with less. It's easy to think that just because someone does not hold the title of "CEO" or "vice-president" that they are not just as nervous about the state of our economy as those that do hold those titles.

While we may not be able to thank all our employees through pay raises or bonuses, we should work to find new ways to empower them. Staff or company retreats are a popular way to build camaraderie and company pride. Other firms are inviting employees from all levels to be part of the business and strategic planning processes and assisting in laying out a comprehensive vision for the next few years.

Even more important is to ensure that your workforce is continuing their training and education. When the sounds of hammers and drills do begin to once again fill the air, we need to be ready to respond. Whatever it is you do, tough times require good companies to form a tighter bond to weather the storms that come our way.

There is no way to downsize a company or induce layoffs without letting go of high-character, hard working people. However, companies have a responsibility to put forth a bold vision for how their company will weather the storm and get back on track.

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