



Melissa Kirkaldie, RCM

Wilson Blanchard Management Inc.

Year entered the profession: 2009

Year RCM obtained: 2015

Other education: Advanced Diploma in Business Management from Conestoga College

Mentor(s) in the industry: Over the years I have been fortunate to work with many experienced individuals in the condo industry but specifically Karen Reynolds (RCM, ACCI, FCCI, AIHM, ARP, CMOC) and Brad Wells (RCM) have helped me continue to excel in this profession.

Under a newly proposed Act, licensing for condominium managers will soon be a reality. How will a licence benefit your career as a condo manager? What impact might this have for condo managers in Ontario? Licensing of condo managers will be extremely beneficial to me and the profession as a whole. It will not only hold managers more accountable for their actions with regards to how they manage their properties but also how they conduct themselves in the industry. I believe that following licensing there will be a higher quality of service provided due to the training and education that will be required. Condo managers in Ontario will need to make their career a priority and meet the stricter guidelines for training and continuing education under the Act regardless of the possible costs associated with this.

This year ACMO is celebrating its 40th anniversary. What does ACMO

mean to you? To me ACMO means providing education, support to condominium managers and ensuring a high level of ethical standards are being upheld by all of its members. Working for a management company that is ACMO 2000 certified also provides me with the assurance that where I work also meets the standards for quality service that I, as an RCM, am required to meet.

Tell us about a personal success story on the job. I have facilitated various successes for the condos that I manage which I consider personal success but in particular those that stand out are when I am able to implement a plan in order to help a corporation get out of significant financial deficit due to previous mismanagement or when I have accomplished a significant cost savings project such as lighting retrofits, the installation of high efficiency mechanical equipment or utility saving devices.

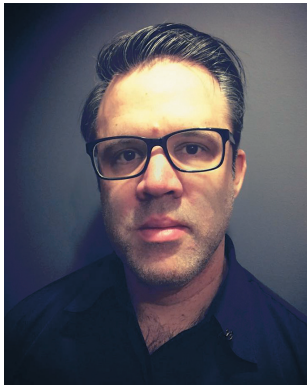
What's your biggest challenge as a manager? What's your favourite part of the job? The biggest challenge for me as a manager is having to constantly make an effort to be proactive when so much of what condo managers do is reacting to situations that are presently going on at the corporations in our portfolio. My favourite part of the job is developing and implementing techniques that can

enhance the condos that I manage such as cost savings projects, improved resident communication, and planning for major repairs or replacements.

Best business advice you ever received. "Hard work leads to great success."

What recent project that you completed can we highlight (do you have any photos to include)? A low-rise condominium property located in Kitchener, Ontario consisting of 46 units completed an LED retrofit. The project completed at this building was relatively simple compared to larger scale projects that have taken place at other condos. The corporation knew that they would be eligible for the incentive program that would provide them with a rebate once the retrofit was completed, on top of the anticipated energy savings.

The condominium spent about \$4,500 on the supplies required for this project. The rebate that was received from 'Save on Energy' was about \$1,500. The payback periods for both the interior and the exterior lighting were both under two years. The contractor who was hired to complete the retrofit estimated the annual energy savings at almost \$2,000. In the first year following the LED retrofit this corporation was able to decrease their annual hydro budget by a substantial 18.8%. ■



Sean Wilde UE, RCM

Lee Management Solutions Inc.
Year entered the profession: 2003
Year RCM obtained: 2015

Other education: Wilfrid Laurier University, Honours Anthropology and Philosophy

Mentor(s) in the industry: I greatly respect a number of other property managers in the industry and have had numerous conversations about the industry with them. However, the person in the industry who has helped me the most would be Gwen Story from RLB LLP.

Under a newly proposed Act, licensing for condominium managers will soon be a reality. How will a licence benefit your career as a condo manager? What impact might this have for condo managers in Ontario? It's about time! I believe licensing will give more legitimacy to our industry and to individual property managers. It will benefit both

myself and any other licensed condo manager by distinguishing us from other unlicensed property managers as well as making us more marketable.

A large number of property managers do not have their RCM. I believe licensing will force them to make a decision; get their courses and get licensed, sell their companies if they are the owners, or be mentored by a licensed manager. I think we'll see some companies disappear or get amalgamated, or shifts of some managers to other companies with the resources to support licensing.

This year ACMO is celebrating its 40th anniversary. What does ACMO mean to you? ACMO is an invaluable teaching body. It's helped myself and the people I work with be better property managers.

Tell us about a personal success story on the job. That's difficult to pin down to just one! I really enjoy helping people, and their corporations. I especially enjoy taking on challenging properties that require a large effort to turn around. One personal success story would be taking on a property that couldn't pay its bills and turning it around to where they now have the funds in their reserve to begin investing. Renegotiating contracts, balancing their budget, stopping the hemorrhaging of the operating account and generating new revenue all played a role.

What's your biggest challenge as a manager? What's your favourite part of the job? My biggest challenge is managing expectations. I sometimes find owners think I only

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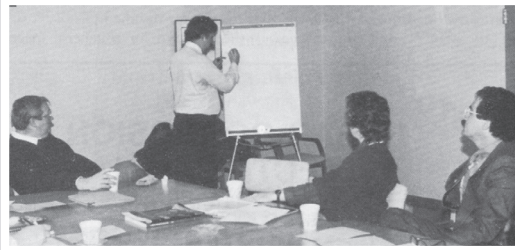
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manage their property, and wonder why I'm not immediately answering them on minor queries. My favourite part is related to my biggest challenge: managing different personalities and adapting to provide each the customer service they require.

Best business advice you ever received. The best business advice I ever received was from Nathan Helder, the president of Gelderman Landscape Services. He said "Sean if you can't be first, be second." The context was, you won't always get a contract or even keep one. But if you aren't first, then be second, in their mind and ready to come in should they need you. ■

ACMO is 40!

In addition to the theme of Customer Service, the summer issue of CM magazine will be a celebration of ACMO's 40th anniversary. If you have a story, a picture from your archives or an anecdote that you'd like to share with CM readers, contact editor@acmo.org before the editorial deadline of April 25.



Sean Wilde Spotlight



Before



After



After



Before



After



After

As a team we recently completed a substantial change to the common elements of a corporation. They had received feedback their amenity space was lacking, and damaging property value. Once hearing this feedback we began the following process:

- Verified the feedback via local experts (condo realtors)
- Reported back to the board
- Verified the process of a substantial change with the lawyer
- Reported back to the board
- Obtained and organized quotes for the change
- Updated the reserve fund study (it was due to be updated so the timing was perfect) to include the changes
- Reported back to the board
- Prepared a presentation for the owners and called a special meeting for it
- Had the owners vote on the change
- Scheduled and coordinated trades

As you can see the before and after pictures are quite dramatic.