

Steve Lynch elected DASMA president

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In January, Steve Lynch, president of Clopay Building Products, was elected president of the Door & Access Systems Manufacturers Association when Bearge Miller's two-year term concluded. Here is a look at the new president's perspectives on effective management and on DASMA.

You have always seemed to be a very approachable, down-to-earth leader who is respected by his employees. How would you describe your management style at Clopay?

Thank you, Tom. That is certainly the way I want members of the industry to perceive me as I assume the role of DASMA president.

I don't know that I have a true "management style," but I firmly believe that the role of a leader and top managers is to serve the rest of the organization by clearly defining the mission, empowering people at all levels to act consistent with the mission, and ensuring that they have the right resources to achieve the mission.

My own experience has taught me that everyone, at every level of the company, can be a leader if they choose to be. Many of Clopay's top performers started their careers in entry level positions right here.

Experience has also proven that great ideas can come from people who work outside of new product development or marketing. Our finance team can attest to that. Give people the respect of hearing them out, and you will always learn something new.

Do you have a particular management philosophy that has worked for you?

Not one, but several.

You may be familiar with the Navy's leadership principle: "Ship, Shipmate, Self." We've adopted it as part of our core values at Clopay, and it's very simple. First, take care of the company, then take care of your co-workers, and if you focus on the first two, you ultimately take care of your own success.

Another idea is embodied in a Michelangelo quote I especially like: "The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it."



Steve Lynch milestones

- 1979 Westerville North High School, Columbus, Ohio. He played offensive and defensive tackle in football and competed in the shot and discus in track.
- 1983 Bowling Green State University, Bachelor of Science degree in business administration. He served in student government on the campus Interfraternity Council and as vice president of Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity.
- 1983 Donn Corporation (acquired by United States Gypsum in 1986). He served in various sales and sales management roles.
- 1992 Newell Company. He first served as sales manager and was promoted to vice president of sales in 1996 and to vice president of marketing in 1998.
- 2001 Clopay Building Products. He was hired as vice president of marketing.
- 2009 He was promoted from senior vice president of marketing to president.

Outside the office

- He serves on the board of directors of Southwest Ohio JDRF, an organization that funds type 1 diabetes research.
- He and his wife, Jeri, will be married 33 years in November.
- They have three children, ages 23, 29, and 31.
- He is a football fan of the Kansas City Chiefs since Super Bowl IV and of Notre Dame and Navy.

Some leaders come from an accounting background, some from engineering, some from manufacturing, etc. How does your background in sales and marketing shape the way you provide direction for Clopay?

We win when our customers win. It is the central theme of Clopay's mission statement, and I am proud to say that we have a team of 1,600-plus employees working to help our customers win every day.

Every DASMA president approaches that job from a different perspective. From your perspective, what stands out as the most pressing needs of the industry today?

Our past presidents have done an outstanding job leading the organization and bringing value to our members. We have been successful in elevating the perception of garage doors as a design feature that can improve a home's curb appeal and resale value through the GarageWowNow campaign. And we have made solid progress exposing the unscrupulous practices perpetuated by the industry's "Bad Bobs."

The shift from R-value to U-factor will have a profound effect on the marketing of all door products in our industry. It's important to have a consistent, industry-wide message to educate consumers and prevent confusion and misinformation.

The work we are doing on building standards and regulation is vitally important. And just like every segment of the building and construction trades, our industry is facing a labor shortage. This has been an ongoing topic of discussion at all levels of the industry and is worthy of greater attention as we look toward the future. ■