

A man in a dark pinstriped suit, white shirt, and yellow tie with blue polka dots is smiling and looking to the right. He is standing against a dark, textured background with warm, golden-brown highlights. The overall mood is professional and confident.

A
MAN
of

WINNING

Jack Henderson's abilities to connect with people on a personal level and communicate in effective ways are some of his principal tools for success—as a businessman, as a past chair of NAED, and now as the recipient of the Association's highest honor.

by Carol Katarsky
photograph by Stan Kaady

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE THAT ANYONE IN THE INDUSTRY HAS ENJOYED HIS OR HER CAREER MORE THAN JACK HENDERSON, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF OKLAHOMA CITY-BASED HUNZICKER BROTHERS AND THIS YEAR'S ARTHUR W. HOOPER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER. HENDERSON'S MODUS OPERANDI IS TO ALWAYS FIND WAYS TO MAKE THE WORK INTERESTING SO IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE WORK. "HE'S JUST A FUN GUY TO BE WITH," SAID BURT SCHRAGA, CEO OF BELL ELECTRIC, SANTA CLARA, CALIF. "HE'S SO ENGAGING AND ALWAYS SO ENGAGED IN WHATEVER HE'S DOING." THAT ATTITUDE HAS SERVED HIM WELL PERSONALLY AND ALSO SERVED AS THE ANCHOR FOR MANY OF THE INITIATIVES HE HAS LED AT HUNZICKER AND THROUGH HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH NAED.

Henderson's longevity and success within the industry would have been hard to predict at the beginning of his career. He admits his tenure with Hunzicker—the only company he's ever worked for—began almost by accident.

"When I first came to Hunzicker, I had no money. I was about to get married, and I needed a job," he recalled. "I didn't understand anything about the industry, but it sounded fine and it paid more than the bank trainee program I had intended to go into."

His first position at Hunzicker was working as the office manager—a job that left him feeling somewhat isolated from the rest of the business. "It's not

until you get out and talk to people that you start to understand the industry because you get to see the vendor, supplier, and user perspectives," he explained.

But over time, Henderson took on additional responsibilities and worked in several other positions at the company. In the process, he developed a highly attuned sense of what makes a distributor run effectively—and still uses every bit of that knowledge from every department. (Henderson happily reports that, when needed, he can still skillfully load and drive one of the company's trucks. "It always gives the guys in the warehouse a little surprise," he said.)

Mike Lockard, president and CEO of Hunzicker Brothers, agreed that Henderson has no lack of energy or engagement with the day-to-day running of the business. "He is very passionate about the business and our employees," Lockard said. "Besides his longevity in the business and our company, he remembers just about every-

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