Ever since CEO of Eustis Services and The Hurley Group, Philippe D. Mack, was young, he has been involved with the building services contracting industry. His grandfather started his own BSC company in 1938 in Montreal, and Mack began working for the family business in 1980. His career started in sales and management roles with Empire Maintenance Industries Inc. After working his way up the industry ranks, Mack joined The Hurley Group in 2005 as senior vice president of operations. Most recently, he held the role of chief operating officer for The Hurley Group. In 2010, after Compass Group Canada acquired The Hurley Group, Mack oversaw the transition of the existing support services brands to Eustis Services. Here Mack talks about the lessons he learned from his father, as well as the traits he looks for when hiring “A” players.

Why did you get involved in this industry?

My grandfather started a building service contracting company in 1938. His three sons were involved in the business, so I had a natural attraction to it. [There were times when I] wanted to know why the phone was ringing at 2 a.m. and my father was off to a site because of an emergency. He used to take me along every Saturday morning to visit one of his clients in downtown Montreal—the client had a special drawer for me filled with toys—so I would play while my father and his client talked about business—but they mostly talked about life, sports, etc. [He was] building a relationship with the client that was based on trust.

What was a lesson or skill that your father taught you that you still use in business and in life in general today?

Never compromise your integrity or your family name, and don’t butt the boots—but the customer!

What was the most valuable lesson you learned during your time at Hurley Corporation?

My personality is integral to my way of doing business. I take responsibility end to end. I push for perfection. I tolerate only “A” players. I look at the business at 20,000 feet and chart a course that will keep the organization focused on growth, quality and cost containment.

What are some of the biggest challenges business owners in the BSC industry are facing today?

The biggest challenge is people. Recruiting, developing and retaining “A” players are critical factors. People need to be engaged and this happens through respect and leadership. Bring them on the journey and work on fostering an ownership culture for stability of key management personnel.

When finding those “A” players, what are some traits you look for in a candidate?

[When I hire people, I look for] integrity and ethics, a passion to create/deliver successful programs and outcomes, a belief that the impossible can be accomplished, great listening skills and attention to details, and the ability to lead and inspire.

Having served in numerous leadership positions, what are some of your top tips for managing employees?

1. Be bold—have confidence in your offer and have the right team
2. Be consistent—operational excellence and continuous improvement
3. Be fresh—complacency is a crime
4. Be close—to your people and your clients
5. Instill ownership at every level

In the next 10-15 years, where do you see the BSC industry?

This is a difficult one to answer. One thing is for sure—there will continue to be more and more consolidation in the marketplace. Successful companies must bring their clients along the journey from single service to multi-services.

What has been the greatest takeaway from your membership in BSCAI?

Being new to the association after many years of absence, I look forward to renewing relationships with my fellow board members and membership, as well as sharing best practices. I also look forward to contributing to the association’s success and increasing awareness amongst my peers in Canada.

If you could suggest one book that every business leader should read, what would it be?

“What Got You Here Won’t Get You There” by Marshall Goldsmith — a proven improvement process that rocks!