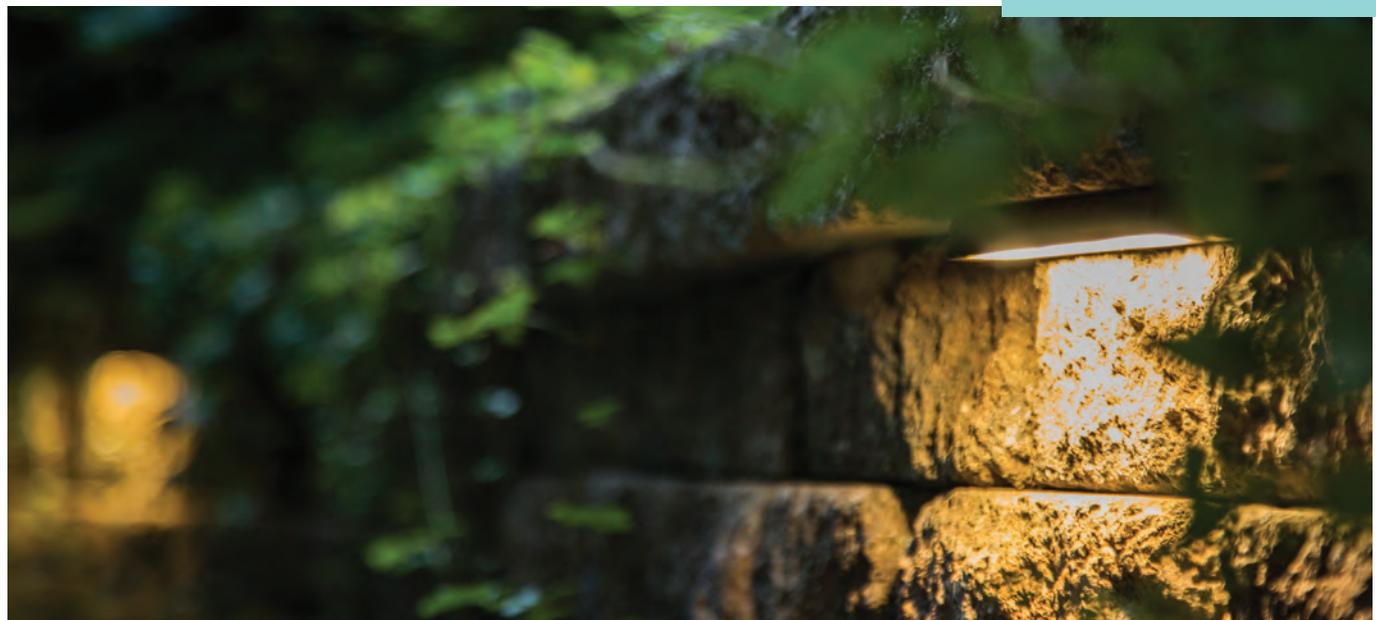


# THE STERLING INSIDER

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THE STERLING LIGHTING, LLC NEWSLETTER



## KEEPING IT SIMPLE

**O**f all the lessons I've learned from running a lighting installation company, one of the most useful has been to keep things simple. From selection to design, I've found that the more choices you offer, the more complicated a project can get. By simplifying what my company offers, I've made things exponentially easier for myself—and for my customers.

### Keep your selections simple

Everyone loves having choices. Walk into any department store and you'll be met with a couple dozen different options for anything from toothpaste to pillow cases. And with the internet, your

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options are almost limitless.

However, sometimes there's a drawback to having so many different options to choose from. While it may be impressive to tell your clients they can have their pick of a hundred different path lights, it often draws

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## KEEPING IT SIMPLE

out the process and makes your customers focus on the wrong thing. Ultimately, you want your customers to be focused on the effect, not the fixture.

### Keep your fixtures simple

Before I designed my own line of fixtures, I offered my customers good/better/best options. However, it muddled the water and, again, took my customers' focus off the effect of lighting on their landscape and home. Instead, they become focused on weighing the pros and cons of more/less expensive products.

As a lighting designer, I want my customers to be confident that I'm offering them the best of everything. The best service. The best product. The best value. That allows them to keep their focus on what's important: beautiful lighting for their home.

### Keep your designs simple

Similar to offering a good/better/best option is offering your customers lighting "packages." While it may seem like a simple solution for your customers and yourself, it really just gives your customers another unnecessary choice to make.

Ditch the A, B, and C options. Keep your designs simple by listening to what your customers want and working with them to achieve it. Every home and every customer is unique, and by taking the time to understand your customers, you can give them exactly what they're looking for without complicating the process.



Patrick Harders, Co-Owner

## INTRODUCING SARA FETTEROLF



Meet Sara Fetterolf, our newest sales representative!

**First of all, where are you from? And what's your favorite thing about where you live?**

I live in Plano, Texas, which is a little north of Dallas. The

best thing about living in Plano is that it's in close proximity to everything you need, but if you want to get out of town, it's close to the airport!

### What is your family like?

My family is incredible and means everything to me. I have 3 children and one grandson. I am extremely blessed.

### What is your favorite book or movie and why?

One of my favorite books is *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom. The book really challenged me to pay closer attention

to the relationships in my life. It's a good reminder of how life is intertwined by the experiences we all share.

### If you could travel to anywhere in the world, where would you go?

If I could go anywhere, I would travel all over Europe. I love that there are so many countries so close to explore, along with their different languages, cultures, landscapes, and lifestyles.

### How did you first learn about us?

I first heard about Sterling Lighting from Patrick Harders. After hearing his enthusiasm and pride when talking about Sterling Lighting, I knew I wanted to be involved on some level.

### What do you enjoy most about working at Sterling Lighting?

I feel extremely fortunate to be a part of the Sterling Lighting team. Everyone is so kind and supportive; we all share the same enthusiasm for the continued success of Sterling Lighting. I also really enjoy meeting with our customers and learning how we can work together for years to come!

*Welcome to the team, Sara! We're so excited for you to join the Sterling Lighting family!*

# OUR CORE VALUES

- WE TAKE THE INITIATIVE •
- WE INNOVATE AND CONSTANTLY IMPROVE •
- WE BELIEVE IN MEETING ALL OF OUR CUSTOMER'S NEEDS •
- WE VALUE OPEN AND HONEST COMMUNICATION •
- WE ARE CONSISTENT, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT •
- WE HAVE "I CAN" ATTITUDES •

One of the most important questions you can ask yourself as a small business owner is, "How do I help create a thriving culture in my company?"

While your purpose will help you understand the direction you want your company to go and your mission will help you measure your progress, your core values are what will ultimately determine the way your business is run from day to day.

But what are core values? First, let's define them: Core values are a shared set of values that create a culture within your company. Core values are not just the values of the company founders, but are values every employee believes in and practices.

Every company has a set of core values, whether they know it or not. I experienced this in the early stages of my other business, DC Mosquito Squad. In the beginning, our business culture reflected a single core value: **get by**. It affected everything: our customer service, how employees treated one another, how we operated on

a day-to-day basis. It wasn't until looking back years later that we saw the problem wasn't just a breakdown of operations, but a breakdown in values.

When you first get started, your core values may be more aspirational, and that's okay. One of our core values at DC Mosquito Squad is "We make data-driven decisions." While we strive to base all our decisions on data, we don't always succeed. We're still working towards implementing that core value throughout our company.

However, what I found—and what I think you will find also—is that there are one or two core values that you won't compromise. For Pat and I, throughout all our companies, those two core values are "Taking the initiative" and "Having an 'I can' attitude." We value these traits so much, we're willing to hire and fire over them (another topic we've

discussed in a previous newsletter edition).

It's also good to keep in mind that there aren't necessarily "right" core values and "wrong" core values. It's dependent on the company. There are some companies out there who believe taking initiative is a bad thing. For example, a toll booth operator does not need to take initiative. They simply need to do what they're told. There's a lot of flexibility when it comes to figuring out the core values that will work best for your company.

Culture's effects are wide-reaching, which is why it's important to be intentional in shaping and forming your company's culture. Embrace your values and let them transform your business into a place you and your employees love to work.

CORE VALUES ARE A SHARED SET OF VALUES THAT CREATE A CULTURE WITHIN YOUR COMPANY.



Damien Sanchez, Co-Owner

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**703-997-5514**

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Open M-F 8:00am to 5:00pm

[info@sllights.com](mailto:info@sllights.com)

Email us 24/7, we are always eager to hear from our customers!

## Top 3 Tech Tips

Today, there are so many resources out there to help you stay on top of your business. These are the top three I've found incredibly helpful, and I hope you do too!

### 1. Zubie ([www.zubie.com](http://www.zubie.com))

When you only have one or two trucks you're sending out, tracking your fleet isn't as important. However, once your operation begins to grow, having up-to-date information on your fleet is invaluable. Zubie helps you keep track of your vehicle maintenance, including sending alerts when your fuel levels are low or when your oil needs to be changed. Zubie's Keys and Apps will also give you real-time information on the position of all your vehicles.

### 2. OnSIP ([www.onsip.com](http://www.onsip.com))

Setting up a phone for your business doesn't need to be complicated. With OnSIP, you can



set up your company's phone system with ease. For outdoor lighting professionals, having a good phone system makes a huge difference, which is why I recommend OnSIP.

### 3. CallRail ([www.callrail.com](http://www.callrail.com))

In marketing, nothing is more valuable than the ability to track how well your marketing efforts are working. CallRail allows you to create, track, and monitor custom phone numbers for all your marketing campaigns. Login online to see which marketing efforts are working and which are underperforming.