



# 2006 National Angus Conference & Tour



## Nulik Challenges, 'What Next?'

by Linda Robbins

BOISE, IDAHO (Sept. 26, 2006) — Rod Nulik, marketing manager for the beef cattle business group of Purina Mills, LLC, in Saint Louis, Mo., defined leadership and suggested five characteristics that are essential for leaders in his after-dinner address to attendees of the 2006 National Angus Conference & Tour.

Nulik said the dictionary was little help in defining leadership until he looked up the word "lead." Finding the definition as "To go before and show the way," clarified the meaning for him. "It's kind of dangerous," Nulik said, "but I kind of like it."

Foremost is personal responsibility, Nulik said, even though that is a concept that's unpopular in today's "It's never my fault" world. With that emphasis on personal accountability, he suggested that leaders needed to be ethical, edifying, enthusiastic, encouraging and empowering.

Nulik emphasized that all leaders make mistakes, but ethical leaders have the character to follow their own convictions and do what they know is right, even when they are criticized for it.

To edify is to educate, inform and communicate, which is critical for leadership, Nulik says, though the challenge is to say what you want to say without being misunderstood. After sharing several humorous examples of messages that were spelled correctly but worded incorrectly, Nulik urged the attendees to communicate often to co-workers and family members what their part means in the bigger scheme of the farm or home to minimize the chances of miscommunication.

Nulik pointed out that former president

Ronald Reagan, known as "the great communicator," followed one rule whenever he made a speech — "Say it well, say it often, say it simply, say it passionately." Passion is important, Nulik said, because leaders have to be cheerleaders, whether in good times or bad, "but especially in the bad times."

Being enthusiastic doesn't mean you have to pretend or be someone you're not, Nulik explained, but it does mean having a positive attitude. Having a positive attitude, he added, is one of the few personal choices we can make every day.

He used Reagan again as an example for empowerment, explaining that Reagan succeeded in "finding good people and staying out of their way." When leaders empower others they give them the chance to succeed and to fail, so they can learn from their failures as well as their successes.

Because encourage has a two-fold meaning, to comfort as well as to challenge, Nulik suggested that we appreciate our successes but not be too comfortable with them.

In the middle of the greatest success the Angus industry has ever had, Nulik challenged attendees to ask themselves, "What next?" because the more successful we are, the more successful we'll expect to be.

Ultimately, Nulik said, we have to be true to ourselves, because, in the end, we have to be able to face ourselves.

You can listen to the audio of Nulik's presentation while viewing his PowerPoint by accessing the files in the newsroom at [www.nationalangusconference.com](http://www.nationalangusconference.com).



Leaders have to be cheerleaders in good times and bad, Rod Nulik, marketing manager for Purina Mills, told attendees of the 2006 National Angus Conference.