BIGGA’s Education and Training Manager, Ken Richardson signs off the year by answering the questions he set last month, and posing yet another...

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

My article in last month’s magazine included a section on Training and Development where I posed five questions and promised that I would print the answers in this edition. There is only one answer and it is The Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager.

The Role of the Head Greenkeeper/Course Manager in Education, Training and Development

What are Education, Training and Development?

Education is learning that expands knowledge and intellectual capacity. However, completing an educational course will not guarantee that any learning can be transferred to the workplace.

Training delivers the information necessary to develop skills or behaviour. It does not ensure that those skills can be transferred to the workplace. Competence can be shown, however, by assessment in the workplace.

Development is a broader ongoing process. It includes both education and training although the key activity is learning from experience and applying any learning to future activities.

The days when a greenkeeper could learn how to do a job and then continue to do it indefinitely have gone. Demands on golf courses and therefore, greenkeepers will continue, change and increase and they will have to learn new skills and adapt old skills and knowledge to improve and develop their potential.

Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers will have to become competent in a new range of skills at a time when they are fully stretched meeting the demands of tomorrow’s golfer.

Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers are responsible for two main areas of staff development. These are:

1. Managing the process of training and development, which is a key element of people management.

2. Active involvement in training and development activities, which involves a range of skills used in formal and informal settings.

Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers are best placed to manage the training and development of their staff because:

1. They are responsible for the performance of their greenkeeping team(s).

2. They should know what standards should be met.

3. They should know what skill and knowledge is required to ensure that standards are met.

4. They should know the strengths and weaknesses of team members.

5. They should know team training and development needs.

6. They should be able to assess the impact of time taken for training and assess the most efficient methods of training and development.

7. They should be able to assess the success (or failure) of any training and development activity.

What are the benefits of ensuring that teams are trained to the maximum level of competence?

Competent greenkeepers set up successful golf courses which reflects well on Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers.

Confident, successful staff will be better motivated, will work harder and remain longer in the job.

Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers with successful teams will suffer from less stress.

In general, the job of Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers is made easier, more enjoyable and less stressful if their teams are competent and well motivated. Conversely, Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers who do not train and develop their staff are more likely to lose the ‘high flyers’ and retain those who cannot move on. This is likely to result in a team that under performs, sets lower standards and is demotivated. Moreover, if a greenkeeper is dismissed for poor performance, those who do not train and develop their staff are more likely to lose the ‘high flyers’ and retain those who cannot move on.

Getting the education and training process right can make the Head Greenkeeper / Course Managers job enjoyable and satisfying. Getting it wrong can have disastrous consequences. Watch out for more information on the role of Head Greenkeepers and Course Managers in education training and development in future editions of Greenkeeper International.

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