

Where Has Our Loyalty Gone?

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I just finished reading the commentary entitled “Management Groups” written by Greg Plotner. I agree with some of what Greg says in the article. There are some situations where an honorable management group is good and can help struggling clubs. I also agree that there are several fly-by-night management groups that are ruining clubs and our industry for personal financial gains, but that’s a whole other topic. However, there is one comment Greg makes that disturbs me tremendously.

Greg comments that if you work for a management group, you will be asked to operate on a tight budget and do more for less. That part is admirable! Most good superintendents are masters at getting the most from their dollars, no matter what the budget is. Budget cuts are a way of life for most superintendents, and a good superintendent will endure. What angers me is where Greg says you will possibly be expected to work for a wage less than what you consider fair. BS!!

Attitudes like that are tearing apart the foundation and hard work established by all who preceded us in building the credibility of our profession.

The standards of our excellence grows in leaps and bounds every year. Therefore our compensation should also grow. In my opinion, 90% of all superintendents are underpaid for what is expected of them. Working for less than what is considered

fair is starting to and will continue to cheapen our profession. PGA professionals surely don’t undersell themselves — why should we? Certain standards should be set and no member of any superintendents association should settle for less than those standards.

I know what a lot of management group superintendents make. All those supers I know are making about \$20,000 a year less than they should. I find it hard to believe that a management group couldn’t come up with \$20,000 extra a year for the most important person in a golf course operation.

Most of the clubs run by management groups are high-volume clubs. If a club plays 40,000 rounds of golf a year, increasing the greens fee or cart fee 50 cents per round will compensate the superintendent. That is only one way to raise sufficient funds — there are many more.

In my opinion, our loyalties should lie within ourselves and our profession, not with management groups who want a lot for a little.

By selling yourself short you are hurting yourself, all who follow you, and you are ripping apart all the hard work of those who fought for years to improve our image. The demands on superintendents increase yearly. It’s time for all superintendents to take a stand and demand more compensation.

— Mark Hamilton, CGCS

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