

Wanting to write an inspirational first editorial as vice president of the FGCSA, I looked back at some previous issues to refresh my memory as to what other officers attempted to relay in their messages. A common theme in several of the editorials dealt with getting involved in your association. While I agree with this sentiment 100 percent, I am going to come at you from a different point of view. I will be

the first to admit that association work is rewarding and is a valuable learning tool... but it may not be for everybody.

As you well know, we work in an exciting, ever-changing industry. And with any industry that is rapidly changing, the people that are most successful are those who continually educate themselves. How that education is obtained is

a personal decision. I would certainly concur with my predecessors that association involvement can increase your understanding of the profession. But is that the only way? Of course it is not.

I have heard every excuse in the book for why golf course superintendents remain close to home on their golf courses and rarely venture out to a chapter meeting, golf outing, educational seminar or conference. Some more popular ones include: I am too busy; my membership will not pay for it; it is during working hours; it is after working hours; I don't feel welcome; there are too many cliques; and the list goes on and on. I am sure you have all heard them and can add to this list.

However, I will give some credit to those who make these excuses if they are reading this editorial. Bravo! Read on! Reading trade journals such as this outstanding one is certainly one method to further your knowledge. I feel fortunate to have a lot of very experienced friends in this business as

well as some that are just beginning their careers. These turf managers work at a variety of different types and sizes of facilities all around the world. It is interesting to look at how many different ways they choose to further educate themselves. I will say I strongly believe there is no right or wrong way. We are all certainly different.

Some of my very good friends rarely, if ever, venture into a golf course superintendent's meeting other than a GCSAA national conference. Is that wrong? Are they missing out? Maybe, but those same people are the first to pick up the phone and call their peers, travel down the road to another course or even to a different state to enhance their knowledge.

From a personal perspective, I can honestly say that some of my most valuable knowledge in this business has been gained by visiting with my peers. It could be on their course, my course, at a meeting, or even in a social situation. I almost always learn at least one thing when I visit with a fellow golf course superintendent and I am not the sole recipient of this increased knowledge. My employer most definitely reaps the benefits as well

How you choose to continue your education is completely up to you. However, I am convinced that no matter how saturated the job market becomes there will always be jobs for quality, well educated, hard-working people. So, if you are happy working every day at your golf course with blinders on, I am happy for you. I am sure you are doing a good job and I wish you good luck. Hopefully, you will not have to compete for a job someday with a peer who has advanced himself or herself further based on his continuing education program.

I honestly hope all golf course superintendents strive to increase their knowledge daily so that, as a group, we can advance this profession to where it needs to be. There is no room for apathy, we need to unite as one and move forward as a strong, well-educated group!

Career Development Choices

UP FRONT



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