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HARD WORK AND GRIT

What paves the road to success hasn't or will ever change.

A lot has been said lately that Obamacare would allow some people to quit working (or work fewer hours) and still receive health care. This was viewed by many as a good thing because it allowed those same people to "do what they really wanted to do." In many cases, that was essentially nothing.

18 year old who sued her parents for money to finish her private high school and for college.

What is going on here? I still contend, as I have my whole life, that hard work is our country's key to success. It isn't always a guarantee, but it is more important than anything else. That is true in our

the rough mower Omar was repairing. They looked up long enough to trade some banter and insults, and then I left. I felt a sense of pride. I had hired them all, pretty much based on the belief that they would work hard and probably enjoy it. Hind-sight says I was right.

Back in the early 70s I made a conscious effort to hire farm kids. Some of it was prejudice – I was a former farm kid. My thinking was that they worked hard and cheerfully. From the time you were big enough to feed chickens or calves, kids were part of what made a successful farming operation. The virtues of working hard were ingrained at an early age, and the opportunities to see the results of your efforts were endless. It turns out the same principles are true for golf course management.

I've noticed in my career, which covers almost five decades, that really successful people work really hard. Effort counts. The Greatest Generation got this right. I saw it in my parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles.

Bookstores have hundreds of titles on the business, economics, psychology, education and the steps to success. And I agree there are other factors involved – from education and intelligence

to discipline and conscientiousness and everything between. If I were to write a book on this topic, it would be a very slender volume. Hard work is first. A close second in success predictors is grit. I have witnessed this up close many times, too.

Grit is a passionate commitment to a single notion. It's a constant that wavers little, if at all. It is perseverance to the max. I think about a new superintendent charged with fairway improvement but no equipment to get the job done. He put ¾-inch tines on his four Ryan Greensaires and slowly moved up and down a fairway at a time. It was time consuming, boring and aggravating, but incredibly effective. His grit got the job done for several years, and the fairways improved dramatically. They were healthier and tolerated closer mowing now that the surface was smoother. There are endless examples of such grit in our golf turf profession.

So, there you have it. Tom Edison famously said success is "1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration." There is no need to set your standards lower to make it appear that you have accomplished more. Just apply hard work and grit; they'll get that job done. **GCI**

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Really? Are you kidding me? I thought the whole program was to help people. Instead, abuse like this is pathetic and counter-productive and is a negative approach to life and success. It essentially condemns hard work in lieu of a freebie from Uncle Sam. Whoever advocates such an approach should be ashamed.

And then there were stories about dumbing down the SAT exam. Fewer students were taking it, scores were going down, and rather than encourage more study and college prep, they made the exam easier. Like Kathleen Parker said, "when the going gets tough, just make the going easier." Even more appalling was the

profession as much as it is in any other. In my travels to golf course around our state, hard work is indeed valued and practiced. I see it everywhere.

During the last GIS, I made a quick stop at our shop (I know it isn't my shop anymore, but I am lucky my successor gave me a key). Chad and Pat were in Florida, but the guys all had their noses to the grindstone, working hard. Dave had a chainsaw in a million pieces, and Omar was tangled up in the rough mower making a repair. Chris had the Foley grinder humming along, proud of his lineup of sharp walking greensmowers. Angel was in a cloud of steam and mist, cleaning the decks of