FeRROMEC® or PHOTOSHOP?

Ferromec AC Liquid Iron gives the deepest green - FAST!
To prove it, we sprayed Ferromec over letters cut from sheets of plywood that were laid on Green #5 at Brookridge Country Club in Overland Park, KS. This picture was shot 48 hours later. Photoshop? Naaaah.

FOR THE DEEPEST GREENS
- GET FeRROMEC AC

- Fast Green-Up • Economical • Easy to Apply • Amine Compatible

Gordon's
An Employee-Owned Company

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YOUR ROLE IN CONSTRUCTION

A golf course superintendent recently suggested that, while he has enjoyed my columns about the practical aspects of course renovation, I could help him more directly by writing about how he might be involved in an upcoming renovation project.

It's a great suggestion because a superintendent usually becomes an owner's representative based on the theory that he knows most about the golf course components that are installed. While this is true, superintendents rarely have much training in construction management, and in general, the golf construction industry is less sophisticated about contract administration than other fields, where full-time administrators are the rule, and it's often a separate profession from designers.

Of course there are seminars, books and even college majors about construction administration. Federal, state, county and city agencies often have their own contract administration manuals and protocols. It's a big subject, so let's look at the big picture of construction evaluation.

A superintendent's role in construction can be stated simply as watching all construction as if he's going to live with the results.

Contractually, it's not as simple. Normally, a superintendent is protecting an owner's interests by having his crew do a quality job under a prescribed budget and a services contract, if any. A superintendent's work as an owner's representative means he'll be working within parameters set in a golf course design agreement and a multimillion dollar construction agreement to get what an owner paid for under those agreements. Those agreements can be daunting, but a superintendent can't avoid them, and his first order of business is to become familiar with their basic outlines and most important details.

Responsibilities can vary, but generally, a golf course architect is responsible for designing and specifying the improvements, usually with an owner's and superintendent's input and approval. During construction, an architect probably is contracted to visit the site about once a week. Under those limitations, he can't see every construction operation or detail, especially if buried after installation, so a designer and club will rely on a superintendent to monitor construction quality daily. Depending on a superintendent's exact role, he'll report any problems to a golf course architect or have the authority to direct a contractor to correct mistakes.

A contractor is responsible for building the project to a golf course architect's specifications. The best ones follow the letter of the specs closely and even try to provide a bit more while still trying to make a reasonable profit.

Human nature and the dynamics of the three-party contract suggest that, no matter how professionally everyone approaches the project, there will be at least some minor conflicts of opinion, if for no other reason than a contract is set up to encourage that for the best resolution dispute.

That type of contract puts a superintendent right in the middle of things. He'll find, like all things, it's really a people business. A superintendent's first responsibilities include maintaining a professional presence and attitude on behalf of an owner, working within the parameters of a construction contract between an owner and contractor, receiving what might be reasonably inferred in the construction contract from the contractor, and working within a construction contract and budget.

Next month, we'll cover specifics.
Don't tolerate Poa on your fairways and tee boxes and all the negative attention it brings. Convert back to lush, green bentgrass rapidly or gradually with Velocity® Herbicide, the first postemergence herbicide for Poa annua and Poa trivialis.

**Velocity® Herbicide**

Reclaim the fairways.™

Read and follow the label instructions before using.
WEB SITES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Can there be a greater difference between night and day? I thought not until I noticed the difference between when a superintendent applies for a job with the support of a personal Web site and when a superintendent applies for a job without one. The availability of a quality, personal Web site transforms the job application process from an arduous, uphill climb to coasting down hill on a well-oiled bike. If you doubt me, read on.

STANDARD JOB APPLICATION PROCESS

The traditional job application process unfolds in the following, always-challenging manner:

1. From the start, trouble begins when candidates submit a cover letter with a resume because candidates have a habit of overloading their resumes with too many words, pages and supporting photographs that make it difficult for a search committee to evaluate their applications.

2. Once received at the club/course, the game of resume Russian roulette begins – applications are put into an ever-growing pile that frequently caps out at more than 100 resumes per job opening.

3. The glaring weakness with the search process is that search committees generally don’t know how to identify the approximate six best candidates they want to interview. Consequently, search committees resort to what’s tantamount to a lottery process to identify who will be interviewed and who won’t, leaving most of the better applicants without an interview opportunity.

4. While the problem is over for those not interviewed, it’s just beginning for those selected for an interview because now they face the daunting task of hard selling themselves cold-turkey to an uninformed search committee in a very few minutes. This results in candidates invariably committing interview suicide because (a) they generally wait to submit their plans of action until walking into the interview room, which guarantees a bland interview; and (b) to overcome the handicaps of ill-defined resumes and late action plans, they talk more about their past jobs than where they would take the target maintenance program specifically if hired.

In summary, is it any wonder that the vast majority of superintendents and assistants applying for jobs not only get discouraged but also begin to doubt themselves seriously?

DEFINING A QUALITY WEB SITE

Before looking closely at the Web-site-supported job application process, it’s important to identify what defines a quality Web site because weak Web sites will not get the job done. The simple logic that applies here is that quality Web sites require a quality inventory of links to the home page. For example, the following summary profiles should be linked when applicable:

- Education history
- Assistant jobs
- Superintendent jobs
- In-house construction
- Career summary
- Projects
- Published articles
- References
- Unique situations

For the next several years, submitting an application with a quality Web-site address virtually will guarantee an interview. Soon thereafter, applications received without Web-site support generally won’t be considered seriously.

WEB-SITE APPLICATION PROCESS

The Web-site-supported application process is evolving in the following manner where applicants:

1. Prepare a more aggressive cover letter that will present the applicant’s Web-site address together with a request for access to specific course data/information that will facilitate the preparation of a more definitive action plan.

2. Forward the cover letter with Web-site address via e-mail to the search committee chairman who will distribute the application upon receipt to the entire search committee electronically. Two strategic benefits quickly gain are that the candidate’s submittal won’t be put in the stored pile of more than 100 hard-copy resumes received and the search committee gains immediate access and time to preliminarily review the applicant’s credentials comfortably.

For the next several years, submitting an application with a quality Web-site address virtually will guarantee an interview. Soon thereafter, applications received without Web-site support generally won’t be considered seriously.

3. Prepare an appropriate action plan of comfortable length (less is more) that will summarize a candidate’s approach to the vacant job should he or she be hired, and submit it electronically to the search committee 10 days prior to the interview. This will allow the search committee to become completely familiar with a candidate’s action plan well before interviewing.

This benefits the candidate significantly because it eliminates the need to hard sell and precipitates a solid interactive question-and-answer session with the search committee that allows candidates to present themselves comfortably and effectively in their best professional light. This is how jobs are won.

Not only are quality Web sites the golden key to effective career advancement, they’re also the key to elevating an entire profession, given the opportunity.
Introducing the new Verti-Drill system from Redexim Charterhouse. Made to work with all Verti-Drains, these big bits will help ease the pain of your turf management budget. The new Verti-Drill system will fit all new and existing Verti-Drain machines utilizing the standard tine heads. This system will greatly improve drainage and relieve compacted areas up to seven times faster than other drilling systems, without pulling a core that would later need to be collected. The gentle drill action also decreases turf healing time, allowing play to resume quickly. Verti-Drills are available in drill diameters of 1/2", 5/8" and 3/4", with working depths to 10".

FREE Verti-Drill Set! Visit www.redexim.com
Motivational Work Environment

"What can I do to motivate (insert employee name)?"

Undoubtedly, this is the most common personnel management question I receive. It's a great question but also difficult and complex. It's easily the most researched and written-about question in organizational behavior.

Let's discuss the question by making three key observations:

1. In a technical sense, the answer to the question is "you can't." Technically, all motivation is self-motivation. For example, I'm the only one who can motivate myself. Don't be alarmed. Although true, this reality doesn't stop you from influencing your employees' motivation levels. But remember, your task is to provide an environment in which your employee will choose to be motivated. Think about the analogy of sports coaches. They can't play the game, but they can teach skills and develop strategies and tactics to enable players to succeed when playing a game. Similarly, superintendents can provide the goals, rewards and culture in which your employees will choose to be motivated.

2. Decades of motivation research haven't given us an exact recipe for the ideal motivational environment for employees. However, there are principles - often differing from common practice - that provide excellent guidance. There's more about this research below.

3. Within the general guidelines of the research, each employee is unique when it comes to providing a motivational environment. Some are self-motivated and seemingly (but not correctly) need little attention from their supervisors. Others retain motivation with constant encouragement and compliments. Still, others require stiff consequences to motivate them to refrain from unacceptable behavior (such as tardiness) and remain focused on excellent work.

Author Marcus Buckingham says great managers discover what's unique about each person and capitalize on it. What you must do to motivate employees can be analogous to putting greens. Each green has a uniqueness that must be recognized and responded to before a course will exceed golfer expectations consistently. Similarly, there are motivation principles that must be supplemented with knowledge about each individual's uniqueness to achieve a motivated golf course maintenance staff.

Remember your task is to provide an environment in which your employees will choose to be motivated.

Perhaps the most frequently referenced motivation theory is psychologist Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory. The first set of factors, called maintenance or hygiene factors, is crucial to employees because a lack of these items causes dissatisfaction among employees. These factors include:

- Economic factors;
- Security needs;
- Social needs;
- Working conditions; and
- Status.

All managers recognize the importance of these factors. However, most believe that providing fair levels of these factors will provide an environment that motivates most employees. Herzberg's theory maintains that fair levels of these factors will eradicate dissatisfaction largely, but these factors don't create a motivational work environment.

A different set of factors provides the environment to motivate employees. Herzberg's motivators augmented with suggestions for applying them to a golf course maintenance staff are:

- Feelings of personal accomplishment. Just as motivation is personal, so is accomplishment. This is where setting goals or assisting employees to set them becomes crucial. The feeling of personal accomplishment occurs when set goals are met and exceeded, or even come close to amid difficult circumstances. Without goals, it's difficult for employees to feel satisfied. For example, satisfaction can be felt from something as simple as checking off completed items on a to-do list.

- Recognition for achievement. Recognition through positive feedback, compliments and reward programs is motivating and reinforces successful behavior. Few managers capitalize sufficiently on this motivator. We are trained to identify problems and, in fact, turf responsibilities require that we excel at identifying problems. For most of us, however, explicitly looking for positives seems unnatural. That, however, is a key part of your supervisory role and is instrumental to building a motivational environment.

- A sense of importance to the business. When talking to employees, I've often been amazed at the magnitude of their positive response when they receive a hat, shirt or jacket bearing the name of the course or organization at which they work. It isn't the hat, shirt or jacket that's important, it's the message it sends. However, this is where dissatisfiers (pay, working conditions, treatment) can come into play. If major dissatisfiers are present, they won't be motivational because employees don't feel they're important to the organization.

Other Herzberg motivators include challenging work, achieving increased responsibility, access to information and involvement in decision-making.

Here are three comments about motivating employees to think about:

- Only your employees can decide their level of motivation.
- Only you can establish the environment that will shape that decision.
- Great managers discover what's unique about each person and capitalize on it.
Solutions that fit any grub problem.

When it comes to grubs and the serious problems they can dish out, Bayer has the solution—products that will prevent or control every no-good grub you may come across, quickly and effectively. Therefore, keeping your course beautiful and green and your reputation golden. And all our products are Backed by Bayer™ and all the support and science that come with it. For more information ask your Bayer Field Sales Representative or visit us at BackedbyBayer.com.
EMERALD DWARF
BERMUDAGRASS FOR GREENS

Photos of Emerald greens at Traditions Golf Club in College Station, Texas planted in 2003.

Photo at left is of a profile taken in 2006 demonstrating 12” root depth on the practice green.
Introducing a tough new Bermudagrass for greens, developed by the breeders of CHAMPION Dwarf Bermudagrass.

EMERALD Dwarf has a unique growth habit which makes it ideal for use in situations which are not well suited to an ultradwarf bermudagrass.

Characteristics of EMERALD Dwarf Bermudagrass

- Shoot density greater than Tifdwarf
- Massive rooting with greater root depth
- Predominantly rhizomatous growth habit
- Tolerates low greens heights
- Not prone to scalping
- Significantly less thatch than other greens cultivars
- Easily overseeded
- Naturally creates a firm putting surface
- Very little “grain” due to lack of stoloniferous growth
- Greater genetic stability than Tifdwarf
- Dark Emerald green color
- Performs well with fewer management inputs

Learn more about Emerald at www.championturffarms.com
About 7 percent of golf course superintendents have an education higher than a four-year college degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two-year college or technical degree</td>
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<td>Four-year college degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctorate degree</td>
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Based on 158 responses from an online poll, +/- 8 percent

What do you earn?

Less than 15 percent of golf course superintendents make more than $100,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $59,000</td>
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<td>$150,000 to $199,000</td>
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</table>

Based on 416 responses from the 2006-2007 Golf Course Industry subscriber survey, +/- 5 percent

Sand in your shorts?

At some golf clubs, bunkers are more of a problem with golfers than greens. Consistency and fairness seem to be the main issues. Most likely, bunkers are a sore spot for many golf course superintendents because golfers complain about them. The following discussion questions – courtesy of Bob Randquist, CGCS, director of grounds at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, Fla. – can help superintendents and golfers determine what perceptions and expectations of bunker conditions should be for their golf course.

1. Should a golfer ever have a buried lie in a bunker?
2. Should a golf ball always roll back to the flat portion of the bunker and not come to rest on a slope?
3. On average, what percentage of the time should a golfer be able to get the ball out of a greenside bunker and into the hole in two shots?
4. On average, what percentage of the time should a golfer be able to hit a shot from a fairway bunker onto a green?
5. Should a golfer ever have to play a shot from underneath or against the lip of a bunker?
6. Should the surface of the sand be smooth or furrowed?
7. Does the playing condition of the bunker provide equal hazard to the low- and high-handicap players?
8. Can you determine and define the difference between a fair and unfair bunker?