



# PATRICK D. WILLIAMS

## THE PROFESSIONAL APPROACH

### A GUY CALLED EMPLOYEE

You are a golf professional. You are an employer. Your people work for you and sometimes against you. Yes, that happens, even though you are paying the freight. Unfair? Maybe. What is simplistically called employee-employer relations is a two-way street. There are abuses on both sides: assumptions about each role that only muddle and confuse the relationship.

Listen, sometime, to any discussion of employees by managers, who should know better. Employees are usually referred to as problems: problems with this and problems with that. Worse, generalities are bandied that

shed little light on the conversation, "People (employees) just don't really know how to work anymore." Who's keeping tabs on the bosses? Never does anyone admit that perhaps "the bosses don't work as hard as they used to anymore." None of us, myself included, are so simple pure that we can righteously accuse while denying our own faults.

I had the pleasure once of listening to a speech by the president of a company, who said that the only way to run a business efficiently was to eliminate as many of the employees as possible. By so doing, he said, one eliminates the bulk of the business problems. When questioned about his

business operation, he indicated that his company employed more than 10,000 people. Question: Does this guy know what he is talking about? He added that companies comparable to his have 30 to 40 per cent more employees than his company. Conclusion: Less problems, higher profit returns. This man's major point was this: the backbone of any business is the people who daily perform the business function.

The normally astute Mr. Webster states that an employee is "one employed by another usually for wages and in a position below the executive level." An employer is "one who employs." How blissful management would be if the process were that simple!

For openers, what about the cycles which anybody experiences, you included. During one cycle, you could kick, fire, cuss or sue everyone within eyesight. During another, you could hug, praise, rave, raise wages and idolize everyone around you. During some cycles, you couldn't care less about your people.

However human these moods are, you really cannot afford them in your business operation. They can ultimately work against you.

Some comments regarding the employer-employee relationship:

Get rid of those people who are not a daily backbone to your business. They create problems for you that you don't deserve;

It is unwise for an employer to be a "friend" to his employees. This may sound harsh, but try to remember back when you had employees who knew everything about you and about whom you knew everything. Things got a little close from time to time, didn't they? An employer must keep a psychological advantage over his employees, which is hard to maintain if the employee is a good, close friend.

Employees like a boss—one boss, not two or three. They work for em-


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### WILLIAMS *from 34D*

ployers because they have to or they want to. They want leadership. How many times have you tried to promote some guy to more responsibility only to hear him say, "I pass." Few people want to be the boss: most want to work for somebody else.

□Eliminate cycles on your part. This is probably the most difficult part of employee relations and probably the most important. When you come to work with "gas on your stomach" it rubs off on your people. When you badmouth your business, the business usually gets worse. When you show a lack of initiative, drive, get-up-and-go, your employees will inherit those same feelings in multiples of 10. Yours is the driving force, and you're out there all by yourself.

□Hire the people who "feel" right to you. Fire them when you lose that "feel." There is no sure way to know what kind of employee anyone will make. Try them. If they don't work out, almost immediately send them on down the road. Now I know that some people will say that's not very fair, but keep in mind that your success and your other employees' success depends on a team effort. No bad apples needed today.

□Fairness is fundamental to good employee relations: fairness to the employees and fairness to the boss. You have obligations to them: they have obligations to you. A failure to fulfill on either side of the road eliminates the other side's obligations.

□Fairness on the employer's side includes an accurate picture of the job before the employee starts to work; a fair level of pay and other benefits; a job that he can handle efficiently; a potential for growth; and above all, guidance, direction, control, and security — or at least a feeling of security.

□Fairness on the employee's side includes an undying willingness to do the best job he can. No shortcuts, no short-sheeting, no laying down. The best he can possibly do.

□Praise your employees when they have earned praise. Criticize constructively when they screw things up. Most of us, by the way, handle the criticizing portion adequately, but we come up way short on the praise portion. A point to ponder yourself.

□Employees want objectives they can fulfill and accomplish. The worst thing in the world for an employee is to have

him go home every night wondering what *he* accomplished today. Lack of objectives is the primary breeding ground of discontent.

□Employees cannot read your mind or second-guess you. Be specific, outline it, repeat it and follow it up. You are getting paid to make the major mistakes, so make them yourself. Don't palm off a mistake on one of your employees because *you* failed to make sure they understood what you wanted.

□And they are the backbone. If you have someone who consistently performs below par, it is your fault and only yours. You have either failed in your job or you should have fired the guy a long time ago.

Business is not selling goods and services. Business is people who buy and sell. People buy and sell from people; therefore, we have to assume that your best bullet is shot when you have the best people possible. Since you are "a person," you must sell yourself not only to your customers but first of all to your employees. If you can sell them—they should be able to sell anyone who walks in the door.

Employer-employee relations has no room for the axiom, "It matters not whether you win or lose." But we must add "how you play the game" has a major role in the final outcome. If you are the boss, be fair, be equitable, set objectives, be consistent, give guidance, exercise control, expect and demand a good job, and you will automatically determine the final score. □

### PGA SHOW, WINTER EVENTS SLATED FOR DISNEY WORLD

LAKE PARK, FLA.—The 1975 Professional Golfers' Assn. winter program, which includes the national merchandise show and the seniors' championship, will be held in January at Walt Disney World, according to an announcement by PGA President William Clarke.

The merchandise show, to be held January 26 to 29, will be housed indoors for the first time in its 23-year history. More than 400 booths for over 200 exhibitors will occupy ballrooms and exhibit halls in the Contemporary Resort Hotel and the adjacent annex building.

The five traditional tournaments played throughout January will be held on the Palm and Magnolia courses in the Disney World complex.