The Superintendent Fit

So just what is the superintendent fit? How does the superintendent fit? How do you as a superintendent fit into the management team at your golf club? Do you and your staff get the respect of everybody at your golf course? Or, are you taken for granted by your golfers and not accorded the treatment that a professional deserves? Indeed, do your superiors view your work as that of a professional? Do you, as a golf course manager, view yourself as a true professional?

These may be some pretty heavy questions, but, in my opinion, are questions that we should all ask ourselves from time to time.

How should the golf course superintendent be viewed by the golfers, fellow staff, BOD, owners, municipal officials or whomever? If you, as a superintendent, have any smarts whatsoever, you will insure, through your job performance, that everybody views you and your staff with a sense of respect, even awe, in light of what they experience every day out on your magnificent golf course.

Remember, golfers generally have a very poor idea of how it is that the golf course looks and plays so great on a daily basis. There is a bit of mystery involved in the looks of a well-maintained golf course, at least in their minds. It serves notice that course managers are highly trained and experienced professionals.

Each and every superintendent must carve out a niche and enhance it whenever possible. Mainly, it’s carved out through the performance of your responsibilities, which should result in a finely conditioned golf course complex. This results in a strong superintendent fit.

Recognition can also come from professional involvement in turfgrass associations, involvement in church or civic groups, other business involvement, or simply by playing the game of golf. Like it or not, non-golfers, a golfing superintendent, for some reason, is perceived to understand the game just a little bit better.

Golf course conditioning has changed dramatically even since the '70s when I was in high school. Heck, we didn’t even realize that there was a difference between our golf course and any other, except for those mythically perfect private clubs up in Madison. I still clearly remember hearing about those courses and their plushness. I also remember that nobody seemed to know why they were so perfect. It was assumed that they’d always been that nice without any special care.

Today, we are seeing the ultra-high quality golf course becoming commonplace. As the demand for good course conditioning has risen, so too has the stature of the golf course conditioning.
Superintendent Fit
(Continued from Page 18)

superintendent. This makes for a
great superintendent fit. I can't im-
agine being in a position of the
greenkeeper of yesteryear.

As the quest for ultra high quality
continues, there will also be those in-
stances when excess abuse tends to
creep into the picture. Usually, the
powers-that-be provide funding, ideas
and recommendations in the proper
manner. At too many golf courses,
though, these same people seem to
control everything.

The superintendent must stand up
for himself, his ideas, his recommen-
dations and his programs. This
leadership trait is a common charac-
teristic found in every successful su-
perintendent.

Do not be led around by your green
committee, BOD or owners. Have the
courage to stand up for what's right
and proper. Doing that daily will
make you a better superintendent,
and will enhance your superinten-
dent fit.

The superintendent must be
given the autonomy to operate the
golf course in the correct manner.
The key, however, is that each su-
perintendent must earn this autono-
my through solid course
management, leadership, ability, dili-
gence/work ethic and a good
knowledge of golf.

In addition, the superintendent
must have the intestinal fortitude to
stand up for certain beliefs. By em-
ploying this fortitude, you will begin
to create a better superintendent fit.

Your superintendent fit will be
much smoother and your stature will
rise if you stand up for yourself. This
is, of course, assuming that you are
right in your recommended course of
action. Secondly, you need a track
record of good management to rely on
before being so bold as to stand up to
your Board of Directors on a particu-
lar issue.

There seem to be too many in-
stances of others making decisions
and then expecting the superinten-
dent to blindly carry out their orders.
Enhance your superintendent fit by
standing up for yourself. It's what any
good manager is supposed to do.
In other words, don't let anyone else
run your show.

—Pat Norton,
Grass Roots, WGCSA

Butch Greeninger and Kevin Clunis discuss going “Downtown” for the Annual
Conference.

Rohling
Green
corp.

Specializing in
Re-Design & Construction
of Golf Courses

Consultants
Project Management

Contact:
Gerald “Gary” Rohling
817 Gates Avenue
Elk River, MN 55330

(612) 441-5127
Fax (612) 441-3851

Pumpco

Brainerd 1-800-448-7867
Metro 1-800-950-8265
Willmar 1-800-232-1431

NOW IN STOCK:
Berkeley Centrifugals

COMPLETE
MACHINE SHOP

26