

# IMPROVE YOUR MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

## PART II

Responsibility of others is one of the chief causes of tension in executives. To prove this idea, an experiment was conducted in the 1950's with two monkeys.

Scientists devised a method of giving one of the monkeys "executive training" under carefully controlled laboratory conditions.

The monkey chosen for executive training was strapped in a chair with his feet on a plate capable of giving him a minor electric shock. Then they put a light over the chair and turned the light on 20 seconds before each shock. A lever was placed by the monkey's chair. If he pulled the lever after the light came on, the light would go out and there would be no shock. The executive monkey learned to avoid the shock very quickly.

The scientists then placed another monkey across the room with the same set up, except that the second monkey's lever didn't work. However, the monkeys soon learned that the first monkey's lever would work for both, turning off the second monkey's light and protecting him from shock as well. This made the first monkey an executive, since he was now responsible for preventing shock from the second one.

The first monkey was intelligent. He quickly took over, protecting both himself and his colleague from shock, responding to both lights or either light without difficulty.

There was no outward change in either monkey as the experiment continued, but after a while, the executive monkey, responding to the stress of responsibility for another, developed stomach ulcers. The second monkey's health remained unchanged.

A golf course superintendent is a true executive, more than just a functional official or administrator. Executives have traits or characteristics which are important to the success of any golf course operation. As executives, we should develop methods to advance the performance of the work which we supervise. Unless improvement is a current part of our daily activities our own future is probably in danger. We must rely upon our own self development to avoid becoming slaves to our growing responsibilities. Since our jobs have become more advanced in technology each year, we should make every effort to attend seminars and conferences to keep abreast of changes within our industry.

As executives, we are confronted with a variety of problems. To them we apply our ingenuity, training, education, and experience. Decisions are made, action is taken, and a degree of accomplishment results. We should then compare these results with the goals originally aimed for the measure our quality of performance as a superintendent and manager of operations, equipment, and manpower. Self evaluation is not as easy as it sounds — but necessary for a progressive superintendent, or any executive.

A superintendent possesses all-around or balanced skills, sort of semi-professional plumber, electrician, carpenter, construction engineer, horticulturalist, arborist, landscaper, plant pathologist, mechanic, agronomist, etc., none of which are beneficial to the development of your management skills, or title as superintendent.

To be a jack of all trades is typical of any efficient golf course superintendent; being a functional, effective supervisor requires "tools" that are not as tangible as are needed in the aforementioned trades. Craig Spottswood

To be more specific, the basic fundamentals that we apply at our country club — such as defining objectives, planning for their completion, organizing operations, motivating personnel, writing reports, preparing speeches, and evaluating your results, are all management skills. These skills are not inherited, but must be developed. We need to practice the use of these management skills as we would the use of any equipment.

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