

Project Scheduling and Time Management

by Walter Montross, CGCS

As with most of you I sometimes feel that there are never enough hours in the day or week to accomplish the demands placed upon us. Besides the normal golf course maintenance practices, there is always a long list of projects that we need to get done. I consider course set up, mowing, trimming and bunker raking as normal maintenance demands. I know that these will be done on a set schedule and I budget the necessary man power on a daily basis to complete these tasks. Everything else then becomes a project, things as simple as weeding a flower bed and edging bunkers, to much more involved projects such as construction, all are considered projects. All of these require man power and a certain amount of time to complete. This is a fairly simple explanation and we all do this all the time. What I think many don't do, is to create a plan. I know that I have a tendency to try to do too much at one time. Earlier in my career I would start a project, notice something else that needed to be done and start working on that also. Inevitably, I had too many projects going and nothing was getting finished in a timely manner. This created the perception to the membership that I wasn't running an efficient ship. I was also wearing out the staff by pushing them hard and of course, I was generating too much overtime in a vain effort to do it all. During those early years I had a wonderful Greens Chairman who pointed out the error of my ways. He suggested that I prioritize the projects, make a list and adhere to it until the project(s) were done. He also suggested that it was important to be realistic in the time demands of a particular project and to not set the schedule much

more than a week in advance. I must clarify that I am not talking about work that is contracted out, unless there will be crew involvement at some point.

The following is a procedure that I have used for many years to help me set a schedule. The first thing you must do is identify what needs to be done. This sounds pretty reasonable but membership demands may take priority over what you want to do or what you think needs to be done. Secondly, I try to only look out about 1-2 weeks in advance, anything longer than that will get changed, I guarantee it. I then write everything down and try to budget how much time and man power something will take and lastly, I prioritize the list. Based on the time and man power demands I then look at my weekly schedule and fit in only what I have a reasonable expectation to get finished during the week. Now you might say to yourself many projects will take longer than a week to finish. I still set a goal of how much of that project we should finish and I write it down. For example, we may be involved with a drainage project that will take a couple of weeks. If we do not finish the project it becomes the priority the following week and everything else is adjusted accordingly. I also create an "open ended" schedule of projects that will be done sometime in the future. There are some weeks that we have as many as 10-15 small projects scheduled and some weeks that we might only work on one thing. If we are successful in completing something ahead of schedule we simply move on to "open

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Reservations & Golf Policies

by Mike Legere, CGCS

Over the winter a copy of the reservation and golf policies, that have gone into effect, were sent to all members of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents. Starting with the June meeting at Country Club of Maryland these policies will be strictly enforced. If you have not made a reservation by the deadline set, you will not be permitted to attend. Members who appear without a reservation will be asked politely to leave.

The Association is responsible to the hosting club for accurate counts given for meals. When members walk in without a reservation, especially during a sit down meal, clubhouse staff may be unprepared to service these extras. It creates last minute havoc that is unnecessary at that function. The same holds true when a member calls the morning of a meeting, expecting to play golf, without making a reservation before the deadline. It throws a last minute wrench into the planning for that day's event that is not necessary.

We are all busy professionals that expect to have appointments made, kept or canceled by visitors to our golf courses. It is time to show the same professional courtesy to your Association and make or cancel reservations on time. The permanent RSVP list is an alternative to assure you have a reservation for a meeting (golf reservations must still be

made), but it is your responsibility to cancel if not attending or you will be billed.

Lets all make a conscientious effort to make reservations by the deadlines, and have a great season!!!

Project Scheduling

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ended" projects. One other trick that works for me is to create the schedule at a calm point in the day. I find it difficult to schedule things rationally when the shop is busy or I am trying to deal with all the catastrophes that seem to be happening. I find the time on Monday morning after the crew is out of the shop as the best time to write down and try to arrange a schedule.

The most important part of any plan is to stick to it. Of course, with any plan the unexpected does occur and you may find yourself juggling things. However, you simply move back to your schedule when you can. Lastly, I try to utilize bulletin boards in the clubhouse to apprise the membership of our plans. This also forces us to stay on task.

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