

## "Strictly Business"

By Bob Costa

Occasionally, situations arise in the workplace concerning employee performance which require exercising some form of disciplinary action. When confronted with such a problem, your responsibility should be to communicate directly with the employee, specifically identifying all work related problems. Your goal should not be centered on punishment, but rather providing him or her with the opportunity to correct their behavior and improve performance. Successfully accomplishing this goal, while protecting you and your employer in the event of a labor dispute, requires the development of disciplinary procedures.

Many times performance problems can be avoided, or better managed, if you invest the time to carefully and specifically define company policies and procedures, as well as the responsibilities and expectations for each position. This services to reduce the likelihood of

performance problems due to the "I didn't know" syndrome and establishes very clearly what the expectations for employment are.

In the event that a violation of a company policy, procedure, or work practice occurs which you feel warrants corrective action, here is a summary of the procedures you should consider following.

**Issue a Verbal Warning** - A verbal warning is issued to an employee at such a time when his or her behavior is considered a violation of the policies, procedures, or work practices set forth by management. A verbal warning should be conducted in private and the discussion must include; a specific statement of the problem, the corrective measures which you are seeking, suggestions for improvement, an explanation of the consequences, and documentation of your discussion for your files.

If the employee does not satisfactorily meet the conditions of the verbal warning you should then consider issuing a written warning.

**Written Warning** - A written warning is issued when the objectives of the verbal

warning have not been satisfactorily met. A written warning should include a private discussion of the problem. The discussion must include; a restating of the problem, including dates if applicable. A restating of the corrective measures which you are seeking and suggestions for improvement. A specific reference to the initial verbal conversation. An explanation of the consequences; in this case a second written warning and suspension. Documentation, signed and dated by the supervisor and a signed and dated statement from the employee which confirms his or her understanding of the problem, including the potential consequences. A copy should be made available to the employee.

If, in spite of the verbal and written warning satisfactory improvement is not shown, a second written warning and suspension should be initiated.

**Suspension** - A suspension is issued when the conditions of the written warning have not been satisfactorily met. A suspension shall be accompanied by a second written warning. A private meeting should result, with the discussion including all of



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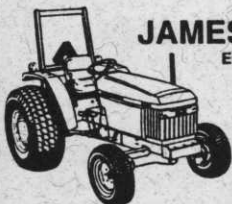
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the elements of the first written warning. When informing an employee of a suspension, ask them to determine in their absence, whether or not they wish to continue working, or feel they are capable of fulfilling the requirements of the job. In other words, force them to take responsibility for their actions. When they return, ask them to explain their decision.

**Discharge** - Discharge of an employee should occur when the conditions of the verbal and written warnings have not been met, and all the procedures outlined above have been satisfactorily completed. A private meeting should be scheduled with the employee and should include: a summary of the cause of dismissal, the final compensation check, the collection of all company property including keys, uniforms and notification of insurance benefits if applicable. At the conclusion of the meeting a summary of the discussion should be prepared for your files.

Although this process may seem rather lengthy and appears to provide more than ample time for an employee to correct their performance problems it accomplishes the

objectives stated earlier.

In summary, managing disciplinary problems requires time, forethought and a plan. Keep these thoughts in mind the next time you are faced with a situation which requires disciplinary action; as often as possible define expectations for performance in writing, be specific in stating the problem, include dates, be thorough in your documentation and finally take responsibility for your employees behavior. Generally, most employees want to perform well. Perhaps their failures are a result of poor training, expectations that were not clearly defined, or maybe they never should have been hired in the first place, and whose fault is that? \*

**Is The Game Better?** (Cont'd.)

has made in the last twenty years my question is: Have we improved the game or just made the playing field more attractive to look at? Could we enjoy the game just as much if a little less time and money were spent on conditioning? Could more people afford to enjoy the game if it were not so expensive to play? Is it really any more fun to play golf now than it was then? Is the game really any better? As for myself, I'm not sure. \*

**Naumann's NorCal News**

Dave Smith has left Tilden Park G.C. in Berkeley to become the superintendent at Micke Grove GC in Lodi, replacing Bob Francine . . . Sam Singh is leaving Mountain Shadows Golf Resort in Rhonert Park to take over for Dave Smith at Tilden Park. All three facilities are managed by American Golf . . . Castle and Cook has taken Riverside GC in Coyote back under its own management team. Mike Swing, superintendent at Seven Oaks CC in Bakersfield is temporarily overseeing the operation until permanent positions are given . . . Mike Higuera left Riverside GC and is the superintendent at Seascape GC in Aptos. He was the superintendent at both courses prior to going full time at Seascape GC.

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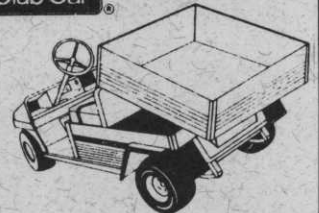
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