

## Imagine An Image

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**W**e, as golf course superintendents, are becoming the focal point of all golf-course and golf-club-related operations. In doing so, we are elevating our own professional positions within the employment and management structure of our golf facilities as they seek (and we become) ever more sophisticated, business-oriented managers. We are the results people: ever efficient, with a smile and a willing "can-do" attitude. That's good . . . but superintendents are also coming under the focus of stringent, critical scrutiny from not only the individuals playing our golf courses, but also the individuals who own these facilities, are board-level operations directors and/or officers, or are placed into titled positions of general management.

The general public is gradually becoming aware of us, as well. It is just now learning who that person is who manages the turf on the golf courses of the world, and how that person strives to be an efficient and environmentally responsible manager. That's good too. We know that we are up to the job in terms of delivering the "goods" to our clientele. But are we adequately and effectively addressing the challenges of bringing our professional management image up to a par with the long-established (and positive) image of our task-related performance? That is unclear. Certainly it is time to seriously focus on the way we are perceived from outside the comfortable realm of our profession.

It is time to consciously work on the visual, verbal and attitude traits of being not only a golf course superintendent, but also a manager who measures up to the standards, values and mores of today's business climate. We are professionals, we know that. What remains as an apparent obstacle is the acceptance of superintendents as equals within the business and professional communities. As we professionally develop ourselves from within, so too is it imperative that we continue that same level of development toward the exterior. Develop it to the extent that others accept the golf course superintendent as their professional and intellectual equal.

We have not accomplished this yet. We may not accomplish this overnight. We have been told, time and time again, about the importance of personal presentation and perceptions. It is time we begin to take notice of and truly begin to implement the steps necessary for a professional image. It will not be easy, and in fact, it may be somewhat costly. What it will be in the end is ultimately

beneficial. And then, perhaps, we shall begin to be regarded as true professional equals in the golf, business and management communities. It will happen as soon as we, as golf course superintendents, begin to devote the same level of dedication to our image as we do to the manicuring of our golf courses. ♦

## Our Survey Says . . .

Over forty survey's were collected from attendees at the recently concluded Golf Course Superintendents Institute. The responses will be used when planning future events.

Here's a sampling of the results:

- ♦ 95% of the respondents would like to return to Santa Cruz in 1998
- ♦ Napa, San Jose, Monterey and San Francisco were suggested as alternate sites
- ♦ 78% like the program, with 22% stating it was okay
- ♦ The program, the food, the golf course and the location were noted most frequently as positive comments, while the length of the lunch and the lack of Q & A were noted as negatives.
- ♦ Cost was a factor in about 50% of those who considered playing golf
- ♦ 44% favored agronomic topics for next year's event, 32% preferred Personal Growth and Management and 23% were interested in Environmental topics.
- ♦ 83% of the respondents thought the idea of providing a limited line of NorCal logoed merchandise was a good idea, with 90% saying they would consider purchasing items such as hats, shirts and sweatshirts.



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