

CELL PHONE ETIQUETTE – HOW PROPER ARE YOU?

Cell phones are everywhere in this day and age. People talk on their cell phones in the car, in grocery stores, in airports – anywhere they can get a signal. However, there are times when it is appropriate to turn cell phones completely off and concentrate your full attention on the task at hand. This is especially true for business meetings.

Golf course management is a fast-paced industry with many different components. Cell phones are a vital tool to keep on top of the details of running a golf course. However, when you are meeting with members, the green committee, or community leaders, it is important to make them feel that your whole attention is focused on that meeting. Text messaging, checking messages, and especially answering a cell phone, sends the message that there are more important things happening than what is going on in that room.

Even if a cell phone is turned to vibrate, the temptation to check the caller ID and see who is calling can be too strong to resist. The best way to stay polite and focused is to turn the cell phone completely off and leave it in a purse or briefcase. Unless you are expecting urgent medical news, there is no reason to answer a call during a meeting. And, if you are waiting for a very important call, tell the members of your meeting before it starts.

Scott Ginsberg, professional speaker and author of "The Power of Approachability," says that answering a cell phone during a meeting "violates the golden rule of interpersonal communication, which is to make the other person feel like the most important person in the world." The rules of cell phone etiquette apply not only to official boardroom-type meetings, but lunch and dinner meetings as well. A more casual atmosphere does not mean rudeness is more acceptable. If you walk into a meeting and immediately set

your phone on the table in front of you (whether it is a table at a restaurant or in a meeting room), you are telling the other person that they may not be as important as whoever might call. Or, as Jerry Seinfeld says, "I have 62 other people on speed dial that I could call if I wanted to; so you'd better be interesting."

Text messaging can also lead to rudeness, however unintentional. If you need to check in with your superintendent or assistant superintendent, say so and excuse yourself to make a quick call. Keeping your head down and hiding the phone in your lap while you text fools no one. Joseph Sommerville, president of Peak Communication Performance, points out that text messaging "forces you to lose eye contact and sends the message that you're not fully engaged." Even if you're in a large gathering or attending a presentation, text messaging will draw attention to the fact that you aren't paying attention.

Unless there is a pending emergency, it is better to be safe than sorry when dealing with cell phones and business etiquette. According to "Six Gadget Etiquette Dos and Don'ts for the Workplace" by Allan Hoffman, "etiquette experts caution that whatever efficiency you gain, you will likely lose in respect when your attention shifts from the meeting agenda to your gadget of choice." Show your fellow meeting participants that they are the most important and turn the cell phone off.

You can always check your voicemail later.

Sources: "Cell Phone Etiquette," Scott Ginsberg, "The Sideroad;" "Business Encourage Mobile Manners," Amy C. Sims, www.etiquetteexpert.com; "Six Gadget Etiquette Dos and Don'ts for the Workplace," Allan Hoffman, www.monster.com.

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the goal of firmer greens is common, Gelernter said there are no guidelines for measuring firmness or for management practices that lead to firmness in conjunction with optimum turf health. Gelernter proposed guidelines of 70 to 125 gravities of firmness (as measured with the precision tool the Clegg Impact meter) for cool-season greens and a soil moisture range of 15 percent to 25 percent.

An update on rapid blight, *Labyrinthula terrestris*, was offered by Dr. Mary Olsen of the University of Arizona. Olsen's findings included:

- On overseeded fairways, fungicide programs that were triggered preventively (timed as soon as the overseed was up) and were based on the high labeled rates of products, such as Insignia, Compass or Fore, were most effective.
- The disease has long been linked with high soil salinity, but Olsen's data shows it is probably sodium, rather than salinity in general, that is responsible for increased disease incidence. Other salts, such as potassium chloride, did not increase the incidence of rapid blight.

Other information presented at the seminar, and posted at the PACE website, include a disease update by Dr. Frank Wong of the University of California, the effects of water quality and quantity on bermudagrass physiology by Dr. Shoumo Mitra of Cal Poly Pomona, and new data on white grub management and poa management by Gelernter.

PACE Turfgrass Research Institute (PACE) is a membership organization that provides research, education and information services to the turf management community. Founded in 1993 by its research directors Wendy Gelernter, Ph.D. and Larry Stowell, Ph.D., the PACE mission is to generate and share independent and objective agronomic information among turf professionals so they may develop management programs that are effective, practical and scientifically sound.

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