

An Employee Motivation Raffle System

By Blake Meentemeyer, agronomist, West Region

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Managing and motivating staff is probably the most difficult part of a golf course superintendent's job. With labor comprising about 60 percent of a typical maintenance budget, it is extremely important to maximize the efficiency of every employee. Sure, the occasional employee appreciation lunch can go a long way, but how can you motivate employees to give their best each and every day?

Dan Tolson at 3 Creek Ranch Golf and Country Club in Jackson, Wyo. has created a unique system to help their maintenance department achieve core values that fall within the club's mission and vision statements. Tolson initiated a raffle system that offers an incentive to improve course conditioning and rewards those employees who work together as a team to reach the core value goals of safety, efficiency, world-class quality and fun. For example, each employee earns ten raffle tickets when the entire staff reaches 5,000 injury-free work hours. Likewise, each employee gets an additional raffle ticket if the entire crew meets an efficiency goal and is out of the shop by 6:10 a.m., ten minutes after start time.



Employees can gain raffle tickets by filling the "bunker barrel" with weeds and rocks from bunkers or filling the "Poa barrel" with hand-picked Poa annua from greens and tees.

Individuals who go beyond expectations also are rewarded and can earn up to an additional five raffle tickets for meeting standards highlighted during training. Raffle tickets are awarded for mastering mowing of greens, tees, and fairways, mastering the art of bunker detailing, and using their eyes and ears to detect irrigation leaks or other course problems in a timely manner. Each manager at 3 Creek Ranch Golf and Country Club has a roll of tickets, so the irrigation technician or an assistant superintendent can easily reward employees who spot issues as small as a leaking sprinkler.

Employees can view running totals of raffle tickets and have friendly competition using the Wunderlist™ app and a Google™ form scoreboard projected in the lunch room. Employees win a pair of embroidered gloves when they reach 50 raffle tickets and a canvas bucket hat at 100 raffle tickets. Other items are raffled at a cookout and safety meeting held bimonthly. This motivating concept is most certainly improving morale and makes work a fun place to be.

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