

Giving Thanks

By Blake Meentemeyer, agronomist, West Region

December 16, 2016

The holiday season provides an opportunity to be thankful for another successful year. It is the perfect time to go out of your way to thank the men and women that diligently work to sustain quality playing surfaces at your facility. Unfortunately, an employee's hard work can go unnoticed by upper management when they are part of a team. Acknowledgment goes a long way in making employees feel good about themselves and their work, plus it can inspire them to work even harder in the future. For many, a simple "thank you" can boost morale and sense of pride. It is often said that the level of course conditioning starts at the maintenance facility. In actuality, high-level conditioning begins with a motivated staff.



There are many ways to show your respect and appreciation of hard work, but sometimes one of the best is with a handshake, a smile and a warm "thank you."

Superintendents, course officials and golfers that take time to acknowledge staff members during the holidays will reap rewards next season. Here are a few ways to motivate staff:

1. Search the [USGA Green Section Record](#) with your staff to investigate challenges encountered during the 2016 growing season.
2. Review the [USGA Course Care Video Collection](#) together and discuss golf course improvement goals for 2017.
3. Discuss long-range career paths and upcoming continuing education opportunities.
4. Teach employees about the rationale and processes involved in budgeting and cost analysis. This knowledge is particularly critical to the growth and development of interns and assistants.
5. Ask for collaboration from staff members when developing or reviewing the golf course master plan, water budget, drought emergency plan or maintenance standards document.
6. Schedule team-building activities such as a putting contest, games, free lunch, a raffle with prizes or a holiday party for the entire staff.

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