

Role of the Green Committee Chairman in Training and Direction of Workers

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I CONSIDER it a distinct pleasure to come to this annual meeting and to encourage all those present in this splendid joint endeavour. From the point of view of a golfer, it is a refreshing experience to be able to meet with men who contribute so much to those who enjoy the game of golf. It is doubly pleasant to recognise what you have done and to realise you are in session today in order to plan even more for the golfers' pleasure. Today, we are enjoying the dreams many of you had years ago, and surely many of us will live to enjoy the careful planning of the men who attend this meeting.

The programme today abounds in men of talent and experience. I am certain we all realise that most of the work in a modern society must be done by corporate bodies, simply because ours is a civilisation of extreme specialisation. Few tasks can, therefore, now be done by a single individual. Most tasks call for numbers of people working together. Experience has shown this can best be done by establishing an organisation. Someone must run things; lines of responsibility must be laid down and people must be allotted their several tasks. In golf, the people tend the physical plant and their talents are exercised in housekeeping and maintenance.

Academic Discipline

To practice a profession one must have acquired mastery of an academic discipline as well as technique for applying this special knowledge to the problems of everyday life. A profession is therefore intellectual in content, practical in application.

First, the golf course superintendent today must have all the respect that goes with the dignity of a profession achieved by practical experience, technical knowledge, tact, and professional ethics. No longer are country clubs interested in men who owe their position to club politics and who, through

lack of any semblance of training in modern management, are totally unfit. No industry employs inexperienced men for work requiring special skills and training.

Jack of all Trades

The Green Committee Chairman is the liaison between the club members and the superintendent. The former is engaged in an avocation while the latter's is a vocation, and in the great majority of cases his only means of livelihood. The superintendent is "a jack of all trades". He is part agronomist, pathologist, mechanic, hydraulic engineer, chemist, business man, and last and by no means least, organiser and leader of men. When in general the membership considers the course maintained in good condition the chairman should go very slowly in making changes in the routine followed by the maintenance force.

Be careful, also, about meddling with the structure of a golf course. It is better to efficiently maintain your present course. Few committees appear to realise that golf, after all, is played for fun, and the most important thing in golf course construction should be to make it more pleasurable. The most successful committees are those that understand requirements and features that make a superior course more enjoyable.

Most members of Green Committees, themselves men of intelligence, experienced, and specialists in their professions, often seek advice from men whose only qualification on matters pertaining to golf is their ability to play a good game. The mere fact that a course is considered to require alteration should be a warning that unless the committee is careful the club may make the same mistakes again, and that every precaution should be taken to insure that any changes to be made shall be of a permanent and lasting character. Beware

of the "built-in" headaches. The cost of expert advice is infinitesimal compared with the cost of unproductive manual labour. The purpose of a golf course should be to give pleasure and that to the greatest number of players possible, without respect to their capabilities. Such a course can be played with thought as well as mechanical skill. The golf course designed so as to afford a variety of shots to accomplish the same end is the course that appeals to the low, middle, and high handicap player.

Point number two concerns the labour force. Labour management is one of the truly difficult problems. As industry grants increased benefits and shorter hours, it becomes more difficult to maintain an adequate labour crew, working long hours, at relatively low pay. Always consider the possibility of the men affiliating themselves with trade unions. When that comes, also comes classification of jobs and certain hours of work on certain days. I know of no problem one can have which requires any more study, thought and understanding.

Firing a Man is Easy

The nature of man being what it is, any sound programme must consider all sides of his nature. It is incumbent on superintendents, therefore, to give rigorous technical and, in a way, moral training to crewmen. In your position as superintendent, always feel that it is much better to train a man to be reliable, honest, and trustworthy than it is to fire him. Firing a man doesn't require much know-how. A well-rounded crew is the mark of a good superintendent, because most of the training comes from the superintendent. your team. If he is *properly assigned* he his training has been neglected by the man who oversees him.

Consider that every crewman is on your team. If he is *properly assigned* he will serve in a measure that reflects his respect and feelings toward you. The nature of every man is to return good for good—you help him and he will help you.

One thought to consider is that if you spend five hours telling a man how to do a job and one hour telling him why

he is doing it, you will make a better workman out of him than if you devote six hours telling him only what to do.

Compliments Breed Pride

Occasionally the chairman should talk to the crew and encourage their good work. Compliments, when and where deserved, breed pride and loyalty to all concerned. If constructive criticism for careless work is in order, the chairman, on these occasions, should not hesitate to speak of it.

I call attention to another phase of getting a job done, which I am sure most superintendents are already doing, but which they can always do better, and that is:

Number one on this list is preparing budgets together with the Green Committee Chairman and his committee. The committee should never be bypassed. There is only one way to provide good maintenance at a reasonable cost. That way is through greater efficiency.

Gentlemen, after the foregoing exhortation, let us explore one more means of improving the efficiency and overall know-how of our maintenance force, I have a recommendation: That the Green Section of the U.S.G.A. in conjunction with the G.C.S.A.A., initiate an educational programme for use by the superintendent and the green chairman to better equip the maintenance force in the performance of their numerous tasks on the golf course. The Green Committee Chairman should assist the superintendent in working out the details of each phase of this programme. Whenever possible, he should be present during the instruction periods and should actively participate in discussions which are bound to take place. I am sure he will then be a valuable entity in the affairs of the club.

In closing, let me say that due to the considerable increase in golfing facilities throughout the country, the many advances in "turf" through research, the lack of competent superintendent material, definite and radical steps must be taken to fill this void.

With grateful acknowledgments to the "U.S.G.A. Golf Journal".