

Communication is the key

I don't know if you followed the US Presidential election and all the amazing problems it produced. As I write it hasn't yet been resolved but hopefully, just hopefully, by the time you read this the most powerful man in the world will be known.

You may call me a cynic but I'm sure through all the legal toings and froings the two men, who traded on the strength of their convictions and the clarity of their policy declarations, would have had no qualms in arguing the opposite case in the courts, if that was what was needed to be done, just to get elected.

"Pregnant chads to be included in the ballot." against, "If people can't complete a simple ballot paper properly their vote shouldn't count."... or "If overseas ballots arrive without postmarks they should be omitted." against, "If ballots from American servicemen arrive on time but a technicality left them without a postmark they should still be counted".

Cases were built around the desires of the person making the case and not the merits of the case itself.

It got me thinking about how it works in normal run of the mill situations. Would you, as greenkeepers for example, take a different view of your golf course if you were a regular club member, and not on the greens staff?

Would you see, for example, an area of the course which has been left untended for 12 months as a conservation area or just unkempt? Would you see aeration work as being to the long term betterment of the greens or just a damn nuisance always coinciding with a regular round, or temporary greens as a logical safety net to ensure members can play in poor weather or an admission of failure to keep the main greens open? Would your thinking change just because of your personal circumstances and not because of the rights and wrongs of the particular case?

There is usually more than one way to look at the same situation and it may be that a side is taken because, as in the US election, it suits someone to argue a particular case, or alternatively that not enough information is available to come to another conclusion.

So the best way to influence a person's thinking, other than to dangle the prospect of high office in front of them, is to give them enough information to come to a different conclusion to the one they originally came up with.

That can happen in a number of ways, formal and informal, but all boil down to the same thing - Communication. Get that right and more people will be on your side of the fence when it comes to differences of opinion. It might not win you a Presidency but it might make your job a little less stressful.

Happy New Year and may all your problems over the next 12 months be the type which make you look good when you solve them!

Scott MacCallum
Editor

Awards for US distributors

American distributors were presented with awards from Bernhard and Company while enjoying a night-time cruise on the Thames through London.

Top north American distributors were presented with the awards for their exceptional sales efforts.

"It has been a great experience visiting the UK," said Pat Duggins, of Florida-based Wesco Turf.

"This is my first trip and the weather here is certainly very different from Florida," he said.

"Sights such as the Houses of Parliament and Tower of London are just great and I had a wonderful time."



Above: Pat Duggins of Wesco Turf, Florida winner of an award from Bernhard for his exceptional sales

Busman's holiday for Irish GKs



A group of Irish greenkeepers made a trip to White Hart Lane, home of Tottenham Hotspur FC to tour the ground and stadium. The trip was sponsored by Advanta Seeds and Lindsay's Turfcare. The picture shows the group with Darren Baldwin, Head Groundsman at White Hart Lane, in the middle of the back row.

Committed to Green recognition

Following a meeting of its International Advisory Commission on 21 November 2000 in Brussels, the Committed to Green Foundation is pleased to announce the first ever awards of Committed to Green Recognition. Fifteen pioneer golf clubs from five European countries will receive the Recognition, which is valid for three years. They are:

Scotland: Kilmacollm GC; Linlithgow GC; Gleneagles (3 courses); Elmwood College
England: Kenwick Park GC; The Belfry (3 courses)
Denmark: Faaborg GC
Finland: Kurk Golf Club; Rantasalmi GC; Ronnas GC; Tarina GC; Sarvik GC (2 courses)
Portugal: Belas Club de Campo; Vilamoura (4 courses); Carvoeiro Golf (2 courses)

"All these clubs have shown a commendable effort to prove their

concern and care for the environment. Many of these are 'typical' small golf clubs, simply wishing to be seen to be responsible managers. But whatever their situation, large and small clubs alike have devoted time and effort to achieving worthwhile environmental improvements," said David Stubbs, Executive Director of the Committed to Green Foundation.

"It is still an early stage in our programme and we are delighted to have such committed pioneers to help us in our mission."

The Recognition process involves clubs submitting an Environmental Statement reporting on their policies, achievements and future targets across eight environmental management categories. To ensure the credibility of the programme, each Statement is subject to on-site verification by

Mountfield joins Europe's largest

Mountfield, the UK's largest petrol engine rotary lawnmower manufacturer, has been acquired by Stiga UK Limited, which is part of an international garden machinery Group currently being formed that includes Stiga of Sweden and Castelgarden and Alpina of Italy.

Mountfield currently manufactures over 100,000 lawnmowers a year retailed through a UK wide servicing dealer network and DIY chains.

Duncan Martin, Mountfield Managing Director, describes this exciting development as, "the most obvious step forward for our dealers, our products and our brand."

This new addition to the Group, retaining all the sales, service, marketing and financial personnel. The new company will have its headquarters in Plymouth and trade as Stiga UK Limited with Duncan Martin as MD.

A move for British Seed Houses

British Seed Houses is moving its Warrington-based amenity seed business to improved facilities at its Swindon site in Lincolnshire following the purchase of adjacent land and buildings.

The move will bring all British Seed Houses amenity seeds processing, packaging and distribution under one roof, improving logistics and efficiency and reducing dependency on third party storage.

The Warrington site is being retained by British Seed Houses parent company Germinal Group for rental to a third party.