

## Are We UP-To-Date?

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"In business, if you don't move forward, you move backward. You don't stand still — nor can you maintain top ranking position just by doing nothing."

So said a respected business executive recently. His company (let's call it Company B), by hard work, sound promotion, good products, modernization and sheer perseverance, had just jumped ahead of Company A, who had been "Number One" in their industry for years.

Why had Company A slipped? For two reasons.

First — its management decided — "Well — we're at the top — no need to push forward anymore — we can relax — our name and reputation will keep us at the top." From that moment, Company A went backward! Its management forgot that its competitors — especially Company B — wanted that top spot — and certainly wouldn't let Company A keep it by default.

Secondly — Company B had set up as an important objective "Unseat Company A as the top firm in our industry" — and "pull out all stops in order to grab that top position".

The principle here applies to any business or profession — including that of managing fine turf, whether on a golf course or elsewhere. If we don't stay up-to-date in thought and action — if we don't move forward — we move backward. We don't just stand still.

How can you get to be "number one" in your profession? Well, it's easy to generalize — use the standard phrases like "hard work", "perseverance", "good planning", "modernization", etc. But there are significant specific things you can — and must — do, to insure that you stay up-to-date and move always forward — maybe right into that "number one" spot in your area. Here are a few of those "specifics".

1. **Get an education** — this means constant and continuing study, whether you're 19 or 59 — whether you've been a turf manager for one year or 30 years — whether you have only a grade school program behind you, or can sport a PhD from an important University.
2. **Build a library** — the books and periodicals on Turf Management are numerous — and many are excellent in scope and content. Have them handy — refer to them often.
3. **Get involved** — you get out of your career only what you put into it. Put **much** into it. Be a member of the GCSAA, and of your local association — attend local, regional and national meetings. But, more than just attend, **participate**. Contribute toward the thinking, the planning, the decision-making, and the action. Leaders are always marked by involvement — and **active** participation.
4. **Take the "extra step"** — the fellow who does just enough to "get by" never becomes the leader — and never reaches the "top rung" of the success ladder. That "top rung" is always reserved for the man who recognizes that his very best may not be quite good enough — and who challenges himself always to do better. He does more (not less) than is expected of him. He "takes the extra step".

5. **Serve others** — help your fellows willingly, when they need, or ask for, a "lift". Let your successes become their successes. As you do, new successes will become yours. The old adage "As ye sow, so shall ye reap" was never more true than when applied to a career. Note that it puts the **effort** — the work — **first**. The return comes later. In any career, the reward, whether financial or in terms of self-satisfaction, comes **after** (not before) the effort. For this reason, the turf manager who becomes the leader is the one who dedicates himself to service. He serves his employer — and he serves his Association. He'll respond affirmatively to each opportunity to serve — and he'll seek more such opportunities. He knows the rewards are significant and sure.

6. **Stay up-to-date** — fulfilling the above conditions will get you well up the success ladder, but you just can't reach that top spot without following this principle. There's an adage that says "If you're doing something this year just like you did it last year, you're probably doing it wrong". That's not 100% true, of course, but it's true often enough that every one of us should take a "close look" at our every activity. As we do, we'll find, in many cases, that **there's a better way!** Change just for the sake of change doesn't make sense — and it's sometimes costly. But change that brings improvement, in terms of better results, lower cost, increased enjoyment of turf, or a job done faster or more efficiently, is a **must** — and should be sought after continually.

If all the above points could be summarized in one word, that word would be "attitude". Take a look around you. You'll find that the really successful career man, in turf or anywhere else, is the man with the positive, humble, helpful attitude — the man with knowledge and vision — with a penchant for improving himself — and serving others.

Let's examine ourselves. How's our attitude? And — are we up-to-date?

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Entertainment Chairman,  
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