

Here are some ground rules that keep old timers in the jobs till retirement time:

1. Gain respect. This almost always has to be developed the first few years on the job. The most natural way to do this is to give them a course they are proud of. This means living your job 24 hours a day. **Work** physically if need be to get the job done and done right. Plan to eliminate all the less than desirable conditions on the course — that the last guy lived with because of lack of budget or initiative. Irrespective of budget almost any job can be done a hole or two at a time. Look around you. Who has the respect of the local association, a top conditioned course? pick his brain. I know a man who has been working 11 years with a limited budget on drainage, irrigation and construction problems — but he knew the need and had the desire. Each year his course is a little bit better than the year before. Worry about your panelled office, dressing like the Pro and the monogrammed golf car after you have proven you are worthy of these attributes.

2. Inspire confidence. It's possible to have the respect of the membership as far as your course is concerned yet they do not have confidence in you because of immature or negative attitude on your part. The best example of this I can think of was a Superintendent who operated a good playable course and worked like a horse; but his whole attitude was that golfers were merely trespassers on his turf who prevented him from maintaining it in perfect or near perfect condition. Needless to say, in spite of a good course, harmony did not prevail.

3. Don't hesitate to say, "I don't know — but I can find out." No one man knows it all. If you attempt to cover up your lack of knowledge with a bluff and it fails, you not only look foolish but your future pronouncements will be all the more circumspect.

4. Make your pitch and then do it their way. If you are trying for anything, from a raise to a new equipment and after your intelligent well-presented case the powers that be are negative about the whole thing — drop it for the time being. Don't let it eat you — just go on doing the best possible job you can with the resources at your command. A good Superintendent, dug in for the long haul can easily outlast 20 green chairmen and as many board of directors. If your plant has merit sooner or later it will go your way.

5. See your position in its right perspective. The golf course is not there because of you. You are there because of the golf course. It is not **your** golf course (if it is you don't need my advice) it really belongs to the golfer. You should cultivate the attitude that this is my creation, my responsibility, my baby; but always bear in mind that you are merely baby-sitting for the true owner. His wants, needs and desires are secondary to turf needs and your personal needs. This calls for fine-hair decisions at times: ie — do you close the course after a four inch rain with soggy greens — and its Saturday — and 260 are expected for a Member Guest? One consolation, I never heard of a GCS giving up his profession because he was bored.

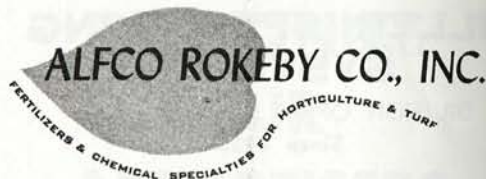
6. Be a specialist. I have read and heard some advice lately that instructs Superintendents to meet every challenge offered and take on all the responsibility he can. This is also a helluva good way to get all bent out of shape and lose sight of just what you were hired for. You are (or should be) a specialist in golf course turf. Not a blacktop installer — a golf car mechanic — an irrigation installer. There are not too many turfmen around but you can **hire** these other specialists who will come in and do their thing (and do it right) and won't annoy you as you go about **your** job. And the irony of it is that most of the Greenkeepers that tackle these "projects" are almost always woefully undermanned and under equipped to begin with — and whose course will suffer the most from this attempt to save the club money. In one classic case a friend of mine was called on the carpet about the "deplorable condition of the course." The deplorable condition came about when he and his greensmen were putting in blacktop paths around the clubhouse during the golfing season. The fact that he saved the club \$2,000 didn't mean a damn to the irate golfers who communicated this unhappiness to the board of directors — and believe me there is never a lack of communication in this direction.

7. Finally, as the commandant of the prison camp said (in the movie Bridge on the River Kwai) Be HAPPY IN YOUR WORK.

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