

## Taken from the Hudson Valley Foreground

### What Makes a Good Job?

While occupied with a job survey a while back it struck me that there is a lot more to a superintendent's job than just salary, fringe benefits, a new workshop and a big budget. I've searched for one word that would describe it and I come back to the word "attitude."

The attitude of the governing board and members toward the Superintendent; AND the attitude of the Superintendent in return. This would embrace:

**Mutual Respect**—I have yet to see a turfman truly happy or successful in his work that did not have the respect of his club. Oddly enough this is something that seems to decrease with time—the longer a Superintendent is on the job the more he is taken for granted. It may be the "new broom" syndrome. A man moves into a job and as a general rule he puts forth extra effort in his enthusiasm with the new challenge. He treads lightly, and does not make waves. Very likely he will make long overdue changes that are very showy and meet with membership approval. He is also likely to be happy with better working conditions of the "new job". The same holds true for the Supes attitudes toward the powers that be. He thinks they are tops—they are very anxious to make him secure in his new position and go all out—extra budget for the new equipment (he feels he **must** have) his house is renovated, and of late the members extend invitations to club functions and even private parties. Every observer of the employment scene knows that the **next** guy in a job will get all the goodies the **outgoing** Superintendent wanted and couldn't get. I know of one case where a Superintendent turned down a pretty good job because the new equipment budget was too low. He should have hung in there. The man who **did** take the job got the new equipment he needed. It almost always happens.

In very few cases does the respect go the other way, that is from Superintendent up . . . and for very good reason. Almost 80% of the feed-back an established turfman (not the new man on the job) gets is in the nature of complaints. Golfers seldom see what you and the men have done—indeed, much of it is invisible—spraying, watering, fertilizing, etc. But they sure as hell notice what has gone undone; and this is what you continually hear about. After a few seasons of this week after week, the Superintendent can hardly be blamed for thinking he is working for unreasonable dolts who can not be satisfied no matter what he does. And God help the guy who makes a real boo-boo. He will have 200 second-guessers chopping him up in the locker-room. The Green Chairman who has to listen to all this every time he plays golf (he golfs to relax from **his** business worries) would be a paragon of virtue if he in turn did not communicate all this unhappiness to the Superintendent and very few paragons of virtue play golf.

**Confidence**—Put on a simple work-a-day level this would be the memberships' attitude that "Our man knows his business". This can be gained within a season or two by a man who does know his craft and/or comes in with an excellent record from a nearby course. This is especially true if it is a course that has been used as a standard of comparison for all the courses.

Case in point: Supt. Pete Par leaves Lush Turf CC

for Thin Turf CC—they are within twenty miles of one another and inter-team matches are played on all courses in the area. Lush Turf has always seemed like perfection to the members of Thin Turf and thus Pete has heavy love and admiration from the day he starts—if he proceeds, he is in business.

Oddly enough Pete never had the confidence of the Lush Turf people because he took the place of the late Ben Birdie who had the rep of knowing every blade of grass on the place. Pete had the misfortune to be young when he took over. That and a few youthful errors and he became that young Peteie. Now even though he sharpened up and ran a fine course he would always remain Young Peteie and be compared unfavorably to old Ben Birdie.

Now you may well ask, "How come Pete would want to leave ole Lush for beat up Thin? "Well, it seems after twenty years that Pete got tired of second class pay for first class work and said, "I'd love to stay, but Thin Turf has offered me more salary". They said, "You would never leave us for that cow-pasture". Pete rented a U-Haul and moved after his 30 day notice. At LTCC he was Peteie, at TTCC He was Mr. Par.

This may be a youth oriented society but bear in mind that the average age of a membership club is likely to be nearer 50 than 20 and this over 30 group will be more critical of a young man than they will be of one more mature. While I am at it I would advise the under 30 prospective Superintendents to add a few year to their age on resumes (sure, lie) and go easy on the Mod clothes, Prince Valiant hair and wild facial growth. Remember that the establishment types that hire and fire equate that look with rebellion, hippies and their own teenagers who are giving them a pain in the ass.

To sum up, the guy who has the respect and confidence of this club is good for a long haul. Fact is, this guy can get into real turf trouble at times (who doesn't) but his members will make a minimum of fuss and the officials will back him up.

Attitudes—Respect and Confidence. It ain't easy.

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