

How Will You Handle a Crisis?

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When I ask myself how I would handle a crisis on my golf course, the types of crises that come to mind are pythium, a hydraulic oil leak on a green or maybe a major irrigation blow out. Pretty easy, everyday stuff, eh?

But what about a crisis with one of my employees or customers? What if I were to be placed in the position of handling a major injury or emotional outburst? Regardless of the cause, what if I needed to take action on an issue concerning a serious threat to life, safety, or the overall well-being of my employees or customers? Am I ready to take charge? After all, I am the one that will be called to the scene ...

A number of basic elements can help you during a crisis of this nature. First, make sure before you act that you or someone you trust calls the appropriate agency needed for assistance. You may not be able to make the call once you are involved in the crisis situation. Have the phone numbers of the local police, county sheriff, local EMS or state EPA posted in a prominent place and posted in the appropriate foreign language of your staff if necessary. Once the call has been made, carefully move into the situation — you don't want the rescuers to find two people down when they arrive. Your primary goal should be to reduce any additional stress and assist the distressed individual(s).

I find the following ideas helpful when sizing up a situation:

- ★ Take charge — be the one in command.
- ★ Carefully assess the problem.
- ★ Try to set an immediate goal.
- ★ Be prepared to support any positive action taken by others at the scene.
- ★ Assist any professional personnel that arrive.
- ★ Follow-up on the actions taken.

If you act quickly and show leadership, you will be able to provide needed assistance directly where it will do the most good. This will minimize the situation and restore a normal level of activity sooner. You will also build a more positive and trusting relationship with your employees and customer.

In summary, keep in mind that in a crisis, you are the rational mind. Use good judgment and a level reaction and you will be a great deal of help. Be prepared — you will react much faster and in the end, feel better about the way you handled your crisis situation.

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