



“Image is everything” is a term that has been heard on TV and in the working world. The image that a person projects is very important. I recently had the pleasure of taking the GCSAA seminar, “Enhancing Your Value as a Professional Golf Course Superintendent.” Our very own Tommy D. Witt was the instructor for the day. Many of the comments I heard that day praised the way Tommy put on the seminar. He was able to explain in many different ways how important the job of being a golf course superintendent is today. If you have the chance to take this seminar in the future, do so!

One of the handouts given to those assembled was a list of the responsibilities and skills required to be a sound golf course superintendent. The list ranged from rules of golf to irrigation to plant nutrition. Tommy asked if there were anymore items that should be added to the given list. Since the list was quite extensive, not many items were brought up. I took this list out the other day and did come up with a few others. We as golf superintendents wear many hats. Not only do we need to know the many aspects of the world of golf, but we also must

take care of the people we work for in many ways.

One of the items we can add to Tommy’s list is “lifesaver.” How many situations have you been in where you have been called a lifesaver. Just the other day, I rescued a stranded snowboard on a pond at the good old Geneva Golf Club. Many people, I am sure, have helped members or patrons jump-start a car. Other lifesaver items include loading or unloading a car or minivan. Most of these situations occur simply because we are around all the time.

Another item we can add is “listener.” We don’t have to pull out a couch and act like a shrink, but there are many times that we are more or less a great sounding board for people to get something off their minds. I love to talk (a lot of people know this fact already) to all of the many different people we come in contact with every day. I also like to listen. Take a minute to listen to the people we meet everyday. Listening is a skill. We all have that special skill within.

How many times have you picked up the phone and called one of your cohorts asking for help or a little support? Let’s add “advisor” to the list. Many of us advise our fellow superintendents on a wide range of items. “Hey, Lukey, what is the name of the plant protectant you used to combat cutworm last week?” Many of us use the advice of our friends to determine if we should use a given product. We also depend on the advice of the many fine salespeople that we work with to tell us which product to use.

I mentioned another item in the last paragraph. Being a “good friend” is a skill in this day and age. In today’s fast-paced world, it’s becoming more and more dif-

icult to have good friendships. The game of golf makes it a little easier to have a good time with the people you enjoy being with. Do yourself a favor this year and play a round of golf with someone different. Who knows who you can become friends with!

Last but not least, let’s add “hero” to the list of skills and responsibilities. Many of us are looked at as heros for the various ways we can present and take care of our golf courses. Some of the budgets superintendents work with take a hero to make them work. Many of the projects that are carried out make heros out of many.

The skills and responsibilities we must possess are endless. All of the items on Tommy’s list and any list in the future will be very important in order to keep up with the everchanging world of golf we live in. We all have a responsibility to keep our golf maintenance skills sharp and up to date!

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