

# Do It With Someone . . . Or By Yourself?

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At every golf course, a time arrives when a large project or renovation needs to be done. The inevitable question comes up: can we do this ourselves, or should we hire a contractor? Many variables must be taken into account—each golf course is unique. Depending on the size of the project or the time of the year, the answer can change from job to job. In some cases, you may want to look at using a qualified golf course contractor.

Contractors have experience in completing many different projects. They do this work on a day-to-day basis, so their crews are already trained. They have seen a variety of approaches to doing projects, and can bring in interesting viewpoints. Contractors are aware of the most up-to-date techniques, which you may not be knowledgeable about. Hiring a contractor may give you many options on the best and most inexpensive way to complete a project. Also, since contractors do this work on a daily basis, they are aware of specialty suppliers or newer materials. These new materials may work better than existing products. What's more, a product that you never heard of might be out there.

Another benefit: Contractors have the ability to buy in large quantities at lower costs. Contractors will also have access to specialized equipment that will help expedite the project. You may be able to rent or borrow certain equipment, but only

contractors will have some items. Most golf courses are equipped to grow and maintain grass, whereas qualified golf course contractors are equipped to do construction. Many equipment options will help the job progress more quickly—and with less mess.

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No doubt, by choosing the right contractor, you should be able to get the work done in a minimal amount of time. Contractors will have all the necessary resources to complete the work with a minimal amount of fuss. Since their profitability is in relation to the amount of work they can complete, they will want to do as many jobs as possible and not dilly-dally around. In hiring a contractor, you should also be able to get a firm price for completing the project—no hidden costs or surprises. Sometimes, this price concerns boards or owners. However, depending on the size of the job,

some contractors may be able to offer some type of payment plan.


One drawback to using a contractor may be trying to get the contractor's schedule to match yours. Weather delays, combined with the reality that a contractor is performing many projects, sometimes can cause problems. Also, some contractors may not know or practice proper etiquette around golfers or on the golf course. They will not know the golf course as intimately as you and your crew. Your contractor will need guidance from you to complete some portions of the work. Finally, the cost for a contractor to complete the work may be higher than if you do all or a portion of the work in-house. You should explore all the costs before you make the final decision.

Another option, of course, is to do the project or renovation in-house. For some individuals, this can be a very rewarding experience. Using your existing crew for the job gives them a nice change of pace. Many employees look forward to the fall because it promises construction projects. After a summer spent doing the same thing day after day, employees welcome the chance to try different things. Your crew will have the opportunity to learn new skills and how to operate different pieces of equipment. You may find that you have some talented individuals working for you right now! Moreover, by doing the work yourself, you gain a great sense of pride and accomplishment. You can have no greater feeling than looking at a finished

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### Director's Column

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tant is that we seek individuals who, once elected, maintain their drive and commitment for the good of the Association. Being an MAGCS director entails a lot of extra work, but it is very rewarding and directors learn a great deal, with results that have value and meaning in everyday life. As past presidents, too, we appreciate the opportunity to contribute with our ideas. We realize, however, that good ideas are only great if realized, and that depends on dedicated people to see them through. Please give serious thought at our annual elections—our Association depends on it. 

### Godspeed, Bruce Borland

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a penny, but he never hesitated when he had the opportunity to buy a boat just to have something the entire family could do together. It was at these moments when Bruce was truly his happiest.

“Kate, his children and his entire family have suffered an immeasurable loss. But because Bruce had a marvelous and enviable way of making all of us feel a part of his family, we all have suffered a loss. But we are all better people for having known Bruce Borland and we thank him for touching all our lives. He will always be a part of us, and will forever hold a special place in our hearts and memories.”

Friends have set up a memorial fund to benefit Bruce Borland's children. Contact the First Union National Bank, 2000 PGA Boulevard, Suite 2200 in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, 33410.



### Do It With Someone . . .

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job and saying, “We did that.” You and your crew will look at the golf course in a new light, viewing areas on the course and remembering when certain projects were completed.

By doing the work in-house, you can start and stop the process as needs change, allowing greater flexibility in trying to meet the needs of the golfers. You have the ability to work when the conditions improve after bad weather. An hour or two at the end of the day can make a difference when added up. Then, you possess the intimate knowledge of the golf course and its underground utilities. Your crew will know where all the wet spots are after a rainstorm. You have already established a relationship with the local suppliers and can usually get materials in a timely fashion. By tackling the project yourself, you may be able to realize substantial savings for the facility, depending on how much is calculated as operating expenses and what is budgeted as capital expense.

A possible downside to doing the work in-house is that the timeframe for the project may be prolonged beyond expectations. You may not have a large enough staff or the specialized equipment needed to complete the work in a timely fashion. The possibility exists that you may not be up-to-date on the latest and greatest construction techniques that would make the project go smoothly. Unknown variables that you did not budget for may increase the cost of the job. One of the foremost issues to consider: the condition of the rest of the golf course may suffer while you and your crew are concentrating on the renovation. Members may be unhappy with the disruption

from the construction and will not tolerate less-than-perfect conditions on the rest of the golf course. This can cause lots of stress! Communication is vital here as you strive to keep everyone informed of progress and field any complaints. In some cases, having someone else responsible for the final result may be more beneficial. Sometimes it is not wise to be remembered as “the guy who built that \*\*\*\*\* pot bunker on #6.”

Clearly, many positives and negatives accompany each scenario. Any project requires your careful thought as you determine the best and most economic way to complete the work. Doing the work in-house can be very rewarding, but also very stressful. Using a golf course contractor can assure getting the work done in a minimal amount of time, but may cost more than doing the work in-house. Sometimes combining in-house efforts with a contractor's expertise makes sense; you can use a contractor for some portions and utilize your crews to do the work for which they are best suited. In some instances, postponing renovations to a later date when more funds will be available is necessary. However, with careful planning and good weather, everyone's renovations should go as smooth as silk.

Right! 