

# Great Advice That I've Received

By Bruce Williams

Over the years, I have been fortunate to be around a group of people who shared many things with me. Their advice has been very valuable as I continue to learn and grow professionally. I thought I might share some of that advice with my peers in



this article.

- The harder I work the luckier I get. Nobody attains success by mere luck alone.
- Hard work alone does not ensure success. You need to toot your own horn and develop your own PR program.

- When it comes to ethics it is really pretty simple. If you take anything that you do or say and could write it on a 3"x 5" card...then tape that card to your forehead for all to see... then it is probably an ethical action or comment.
- The person who thinks he knows it all has a lot to learn. I have always admired the superintendent who attends seminars until retirement. Jim Neal, CGCS attained certification just a year before he retired. Hats off to those who have a lifelong commitment to learning.
- Some would say, "It is not what you know but who you know." I would agree that networking is often overlooked. Let's go a few steps further and think about the idea that it is not only who you know but who *they* know as well.
- The sharpest people I have met have shown me that it is not so important what you know as what you are going to know. Sometimes we need to just shut up and listen, because nobody ever learned anything by talking.
- Find a mentor to help you along your career path. It may be somebody you work for or a peer whom you

respect in the industry. Re-pay the favor by mentoring the next generation of golf course superintendents. Their questions will help you stay young and alert.

- When the golf professional, superintendent and manager have different agendas, nobody wins.
  - The customer or member is not always right but they are the customers. Never lose sight of who pays the bills.
  - Get involved. The best learning exercises, of my adult life, were those gained while serving on committees and boards. Leadership lessons learned have helped at the golf course, as a parent and as a citizen of the community.
  - Dress for success. While it may be an upfront cost, dress like the successful people you aspire to be like. If you want to be thought of and paid like a key member of the staff then look the part.
  - Never miss a chance to speak with your golfers. Be prepared and develop a comfort level for addressing golf groups, green committees, board meetings, etc. Learn to speak the game. Even bogie golfers, like me, can enjoy the game and speak intelligently about it. Position yourself as an insider when it comes to discussions about golf.
  - Don't be a policeman. Show me a superintendent who spends his time worrying about where the carts are being driven and I will show you someone who needs to learn which battles to fight. The golfer that you lock horns with today may be the one who approves your budget (or disapproves your budget) in the years ahead.
  - Love your work. I wouldn't do this job if I didn't love it. The fact that I am compensated well is only icing on the cake. If I won the lotto I would still go to work tomorrow.
  - Don't paint yourself into a corner. Develop external interests that might even provide you an alternate career path in the future. It is a shame to see people unhappily working somewhere because they have to work there to survive. Prepare yourself for those years after age 50. You would be amazed at how many proficiencies you have that could be the beginning of new career paths.
  - Treat people as you would like to be treated yourself. Enough said!
- I have been fortunate to work for people like Bob Williams, Bruce Sering, Frank Dobie and Hubby Habjan. I have been fortunate

to learn from instructors like Joe Vargas, Paul Rieke and Ken Payne. Fellows like this have given me the direction, motivation and inspiration to excel. I will always be thankful for their advice that I have shared with you.

## Obituaries

### T.E. Ed Freeman, UF/IFAS Pathologist, Dies at Age 73

Dr. T. E. Freeman, plant pathologist and turfgrass specialist died on Tuesday, September 16, 2003 in Gainesville, Florida at the age of 73. During his tenure at the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Ed Freeman specialized in turfgrass diseases and their control, publishing extensively on the subject. He chaired the multi-departmental UF/IFAS Turfgrass Working Group for several years. His other area of research involved the biological control of water weeds with plant pathogens.

Dr. Freeman was a positive influence on the lives of his students. In noting those influences, former graduate students Drs. Michael Olexa, director of the Agricultural Law Center UF/IFAS and Ray Martin, chair of the Plant Pathology Department at Purdue University stated that he allowed them the freedom to explore many avenues of research which helped nurture the creative spirit of good scientists and educators. Both agreed that one of the most important lessons they learned from their mentor was that you're never too old to learn. He always expected his students to do more and learn more than he did. Ed Freeman was never ashamed to admit that he didn't know something and was eager to learn about a new technique or result. Both have applied his philosophy of learning to their own students and career development. To these former students, he was a quiet man, a great man, and a good friend and mentor.

Dr. Freeman is survived by his wife of 50 years, Imogene Freeman; son Thomas Freeman; daughter Roxane McGinniss; brother, Barry Freeman; grandchildren, Whitney and Mason McGinniss. Following the memorial service, those attending were provided with turfgrass for planting in Dr.

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