

ENVIRONMENTAL-ISSUES
GROUP PRESENTATION

Learning To Use Power Point

By Mike Mongoven, CGCS

Recently I answered the phone and it was a Mr. Smith calling. He identified himself as the chairman of the local residents' Environmental Issues Group. With a touch of skepticism I wondered why Mr. Smith was calling me. He said he wanted me to be the speaker for their February meeting. I agreed and realized that this was an opportunity to reach out to the community, but I was also a bit nervous.

This scenario took place at my Shell Point Golf Club. The invitation was initiated by the group after they read the press release from Audubon International recognizing Shell Point for achieving certification in Environmental Planning and Water Conservation. The invitation was for a 30-40 minute presentation with questions to follow. I was excited for the opportunity, but at the same time anxious about how and what I was going to do.

My first course of action was to ask for help and I did that liberally. The first e-mail I sent was to Joel Jackson, director of communications for the Florida Golf Course Superintendents. He was both helpful and encouraging. He also gave me several other potential contacts including Mark Johnson, GCSAA; Shelly Foy, USGA; and Joellen Zeh, Audubon International. Joel also sent me a packet



Microsoft PowerPoint turned out to be an excellent tool for creating a presentation about water conservation and other environmental issues on golf course. PowerPoint slide by Mike Mongoven.

of information called the Environmental and Economic Facts about Florida Golf. I also spoke with Dick Bessire and John Houchens of Waste2Water.

When I spoke with Mark Johnson of GCSAA he was very helpful. He was the first person who suggested the potential of using a Power Point presentation. Mark also spoke to me about using the Environmental Institute for Golf link on the GCSAA Web site and pointed me in a direction regarding the presentation. My initial thoughts were to have some type of field trip for the group to the golf maintenance facility. I had never done a Power Point presentation, but had seen many of them. It sounded like a good idea because I could show slides of our recycled water system and not worry about transporting a large group of people.

Shelly Foy and Joellen Zeh were both encouraging. Joellen e-mailed me a prepared Power Point presentation that is used by Audubon International to promote the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. She also gave me some ideas about the structure of the presentation.

I decided to highlight the steps we take on the golf course and at the main-

tenance facility to conserve water and also to review IPM and our Waste2Water system. Setting up the presentation was really very simple. I had help from Dan Dula, one of the Shell Point computer department staff members. He spent about 75 minutes showing me how to set up the program, run the program and even gave me some presentation ideas. It really was a very simple process to add slides and to put pictures on slides.

I gave the oral presentation, but it truly was a cooperative group effort. I'd be remiss if I didn't give credit and thanks to our current golf course superintendent, Mark Jacobs, and former superintendent, Terry Stroyer, now at the City of Ft. Myers G.C., for their hands-on efforts in our programs. Along with Jim Carpenter, our golf professional, they all took pictures of scouting, hand watering, water recycle system and others used for the presentation. I moved the pictures to the slides and then added up to 3 bullet points that would prompt me to discuss related ideas and concepts as the pictures appeared on the screen.

The presentation ended up containing 27 slides. I started and ended with a "Beauty Shot" of the course. Developing the presentation took less

than four hours, which was broken into two days. I continued to tweak the slides until the day before the presentation. When I finished the presentation I e-mailed it to several people including those listed above and to other friends. The comments I got back were very helpful. You can set up the presentation so that the presenter can check notes when showing a slide and these notes will not be obvious to people in the audience. I practiced my script in front of my wife the night before and twice the day of the presentation.

The day of the presentation I got to the meeting room 30 minutes early to make sure everything was set up, including the microphone. I tried to relieve some of my nervousness by greeting people as they entered the room. About 50-55 people attended the meeting. The presentation lasted about 35 minutes and there were about 20 minutes of questions that followed. Most of the questions were positive in nature and I believe that most people were surprised and impressed with our efforts.

The next time you get that call with an opportunity to speak with a group remember all of the people that are willing to help and all of the resources available. Power Point is a great way to communicate to a group and it is very easy to use.

Author's Note: *The group I spoke with is the Environmental Issues Group. It is a Shell Point resident-led group. They are an active group that does things such as pick up trash along a 1.5-mile stretch of a local road, maintain the bike path, many are active in bird watching and counting, most volunteer at John Ding Darling Wildlife Preserve on Sanibel Island. They also lobby the local administration for more native plants and other issues.*



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