

## Employee turnover

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pro-active approach to determine a reasonable and effective turnover rate for their particular operations.

### REDUCING TURNOVER

According to Sibbald and Gustafson, the first step is to differentiate between voluntary and involuntary turnover, and to understand who leaves and why.

"While employees should be regarded as assets rather than expenses, some positions should simply not be regarded as permanent," said Gustafson. "It is often more cost effective to allow employees in easily filled positions to move out or up. As for the truly standout employees, promoting from within allows management to create opportunities which in turn reduce the turnover rate."

Sibbald and Gustafson noted that for the great number of seasonal golf club operations, retaining trained and experienced help is particularly aggravating. They suggested that owners be creative in their incentives and recognition programs to encourage their best employees to return.

Hiring the right person for the job at the onset is, of course, the best means to control the turnover rate. In times of employee shortages, managers pressed for time can easily get a little careless in the selection process. Sibbald and Gustafson reiterated the dangers of "labor crisis management" that involves little more than quick interviews without careful reference checks.

"Simply filling positions with warm bodies can lead to the problems that plague the industry," said Sibbald. "Hired in a crisis mode, new employees are not properly introduced to the company, and usually receive only minimal training, creating the situations that lead to their quitting or being involuntarily dismissed."

They suggested seeking new and perhaps non-traditional sources for new employees such as university programs, internships, the aging workforce, and even welfare to work programs and rehab centers. ■

## Dinosaur Dunes

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can reach up to eight feet high. If you hit your ball into a silage field, it's gone. Our roughs, in some places, reach up to six feet tall."

### MAINTENANCE CHALLENGES

The challenge for Strong and his regulators is that the course is played quite often. "We don't have somebody that manages the course constantly," said Strong. "Members tend to take liberties at times."

For example, there are 20 golf cars on the course owned by individual members. "There are no golf cars provided by the club," Strong explained. "Some golfers will even use John Deere Gators, Quads, ATVs, or - when it is really cold - some will even drive their truck out on the course."

"The constant play makes redesign, maintenance of fairways, changing of tee boxes and everything a real challenge," he continued. "We can't really shut the course down to maintain it or make changes."

The main five regulators - the big helpers - include: Jerry "Big Daddy" Kirchoff, Ron German, Joe Heath, Larry "Swede" Fagerquist, and Paul Parker. Other regulators include: Jim Davis, David Kuhlman, Steve and Melva Barnett, Nikki Hemel, Bev Kirkoff, and Richard and Teresa Hemel. ■

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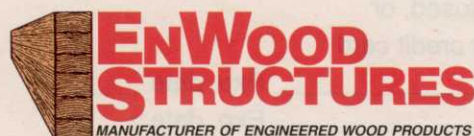
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