



ASSISTANT SUCCESS GUIDE: SURVIVING AND THRIVING

It's not easy being an assistant superintendent who's ready to move on to your own facility.

Matt Rostal, golf course superintendent at Interlachen Country Club, Edina, Minn., sums it up well: "There are so many qualified people, so little jobs."

The golf course construction boom of the 1990s piqued students' interest in turfgrass management as a career, but the decline of rounds has led to a decrease in the number of jobs. Meanwhile, universities continue to churn out turf grads, making competition for existing assistant and superintendent jobs very tough.

On top of the sheer math making it difficult to be an aspiring superintendent today, the role of the "new" assistant is changing as the superintendent's off-the-course demands increase.

"The superintendent is taking more and more of a management/communi-

cation role and the assistant is assuming more day-to-day operational control of the maintenance staff," says consultant Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, president of Golf Agronomy International.

An increase in regulations and business demands of the superintendent profession have contributed to these changes, says Joe Livingston, CGCS, River Crest Country Club, Fort Worth, Texas.

While the actual skill set an assistant needs to take the next step to become a superintendent hasn't changed, the odds of doing so have. As such, assistants need to stay on top of industry advancements, sharpen their management skills and hone their professional conduct to have a shot at the superintendent job they're looking for.

We hope the stories in this guide help. Let us know what you think and send your ideas for next year to gci@gie.net. GCI

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ADVICE YOU SHOULDN'T FORGET

Industry members dole out do's and don'ts for assistants to use in day-to-day operations.

Career advancement advice runs thick for assistant superintendents in the golf course industry (in fact, we provide some more on page 31). But what about the day to day? What practical nuggets do you need to know about managing the golf course, running the crew and being a great assistant overall?

We cast our net to compile this compendium of advice from industry members nationwide.



BY MARISA PALMIERI

DO

Do everything you can to treat your employees with the utmost respect. They are typically the ones working for the lowest wage and working under the most difficult conditions and the longest hours. Never miss an opportunity to say thank you to them for what they do. —Paul Jett, CGCS, Pinehurst (N.C.) No. 2

Start a journal of the daily activities at the course. You won't be able to remember everything you did and when or how you did it. The journal of agronomic activities will be invaluable when you get the opportunity to be in charge. —John Kaminski, assistant professor of turfgrass science at Penn State

Dress for success. Make sure the members can determine who is the worker and who is

the boss. Shave everyday and look neat. —Matt Schaffer, director of golf operations, Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, Pa.

Always work on doing it right the first time. —Ron Dahlin, CGCS, The Meadows Golf Club at Grand Valley State University

Have a positive attitude toward the superintendent and the staff. The staff takes on the personality of the assistant, so a positive assistant leads to a positive and productive staff. —Chad Miller, superintendent, Hillcrest Golf & County Club, Batesville, Ind.

Keep up with the latest research findings not only from your state or region, but from all over the nation. A number of local golf course superintendent associations have online access to the Turfgrass Information File, an extraordinary collection of scientific information about turf management at Michigan State University. If you don't

have access to this resource, work to create momentum within the association to join. —Doug Soldat, assistant professor, Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Be sure that the line of communication between the golf course maintenance department and the membership/customer is strong. An ally in the clubhouse goes a long way to that end, as the face time the pro shop personnel has with customers dwarfs the time the maintenance folks have. —Bruce Gregory, PGA, CGCS, Liberty (Ind.) Country Club

Be "fair, firm and friendly," in that order, when dealing with subordinates. You're a boss and not their best buddy. —Tom Brown, CGCS, Chesapeake Bay Golf Club, Rising Sun, Md.

Play golf at your facility. This will give you a completely different perspective of the agronomic and playability issues at

your facility. Seeing the course through the golfer's eyes is a great way to fine tune your agronomic practices. —Kaminski

If you use tobacco now, QUIT; it only gets harder. —Schaffer

Let the superintendent handle interclub communications. If it's a light comment about the weather, that's fine, but let the superintendent handle sensitive issues in a committee setting, or on the course. —Ray Richard, consultant, Richard Associates, Cape Cod, Mass.

Manage people for success; be a great teacher. —Matt Rosenthal, superintendent, Interlachen Country Club, Edina, Minn.

Come to work at least a ½ hour before the staff so you are ready for changes. —Schaffer

Get to know common equipment operation and common faults; you have to be smarter than the operator and the ma-



chine. Spend time in the shop and get a good overview from your equipment manager. Get a basic understanding of reel mower technicalities, equipment engine differences and specialty equipment like top dressers, aerators and sprayers. —Mike Kriz, equipment manager, Arrowhead Country Club, Rapid City, S.D.

Support the superintendent's policies and decisions in front of the crew whether you agree with them or not. Take up your disagreements with the superintendent one on one. —Brown



DON'T

Expect to learn it all in one year. —Eric Bauer, director of grounds, The Club at Carlton Woods, The Woodlands, Texas

Only speak English. —Tucker

Be afraid of the press. If you have a potential story, contact the newspaper or local television station. There's not a shortage of negative press about golf course management, but many of the positive aspects are often overlooked. —Soldat

Stop being a student. Continue to learn the fundamentals of agronomics while working on the course. Read articles, talk to your peers, and take classes through GCSAA to learn as much as possible. —Kaminski

Forget to wear sunscreen. Too many don't take the time to protect themselves when out on the course. Simply taking a few

Consider clever ideas to reduce costs in labor and eliminate overtime, like two shifts, part-time workers on afternoons and weekends and section workers to eliminate wasteful travel time on-course. —Michael Vogt, CGCS, manager of the McMahon Group's Golf Division

Read the operator's manuals and watch the training videos — all of them. —Bill Hughes, equipment manager, The Loon Golf Club, Gaylord, Mich.

Be an extension of your superintendent. If the superintendent

minutes each morning to apply sun block can help to prevent serious skin problems later in life. —Kaminski

Get caught up in daily activities that keep you from supervision and managing. —Livingston

Hesitate to ask questions! —Flanagan

Forget that you'll have to work to earn the crewmembers' respect. —Hughes

Ever mix a chemical without looking at the label. New products come out; rates and labels change. Just because you have been spraying this product for the last several years, it only takes a second to check the rate and make sure it is right. One incorrect spray application can quickly cost you a job. —Jett

Forget to have a life away from the golf course. Longevity in this business can only be achieved

is gone, execute the cultural practices in the same manner as he or she would do it. —Troy Flanagan, superintendent, Anthem Country Club, Henderson, Nev.

Have excellent communication skills. —Stephen Tucker, equipment manager, Ritz-Carlton Members Golf Club, Bradenton, Fla.

Continually monitor the course, equipment, and staff with the idea of improving upon the entire operation. —Joe Livingston, CGCS, River Crest Country Club, Fort Worth, Texas

by knowing when to go home. —Brown

Be close minded. Listen, learn and carry out the superintendent's plan as best you can. The assistant's job is to carry out the plans, not to undermine them if don't completely agree. —Miller

Give someone a job that you wouldn't do or haven't done yourself at some point. Lead by example. —Brown

Expect everyone to like you because some won't. —Hughes

Manage everyone the same way. People are different. Take time to figure out how they work and manage them accordingly. —Schaffer

Forget to take off your sunglasses and look people in the eye when you talk to them. —Schaffer

Ignore a member/golfer when they pass by. —Richard

Tell the truth. Owning up to a mistake goes a long way to establishing trust between the superintendent and you. —Brown

Learn to delegate, don't think you can do it all yourself. In fact, when you are working who is supervising? Give yourself jobs that allow you to move within the ranks. —Schaffer

Serve as a course information conduit to the superintendent. Mention good and bad news. If you see a staffing or cultural problem, say something. —Richard

Forget that golf is now centered on a business that needs to be concerned with profits and losses. Just because you have an approved budget doesn't necessarily mean the amount of that budget should or must be spent. —Vogt

Automatically say "no." People don't like to hear it. —Rostal

Take corrective criticism personally. It's meant to help, not hinder. —Hughes

Expect to have a 9-to-5 job, expect to have holidays off or expect to become rich as an assistant. —Bauer

Badmouth equipment just because it's not what you had at your last course. —Kriz GCI

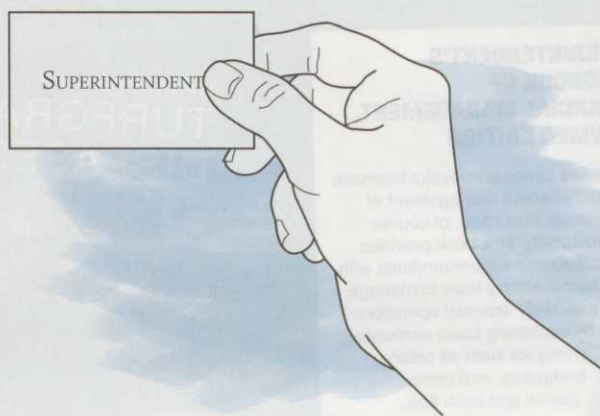
What advice do you believe all assistant superintendents should follow? What do you know now that you wish you knew when you were an assistant? E-mail us at gci@gie.net and we'll print our favorites.



MISSION: MOVE UP THE LADDER

Is your handicap on your resume? Maybe it should be. That and other career advice from the Atlanta Athletic Club's Ken Mangum, CGCS.

By MARISA PALMIERI



As the director of golf courses and grounds at the Atlanta Athletic Club overseeing two championship golf courses and a par-3 course, Ken Mangum, CGCS, knows a thing or two about “taking the next step.”

A graduate of Lake City Community College's two-year golf course operations program, he's been at AAC for 21 years and in the industry for 31 years, making a name for himself managing the redesigns of both of AAC's championship courses and hosting tournaments, such as the 2011 PGA Championship.

Considering his credentials, Mangum frequently doles out advice to aspiring superintendents (see “GSA Journal,” page 34). Golf Course Industry senior editor Marisa Palmieri spoke with Mangum to cull some of his best career advice for assistants.

What's the No. 1 career mistake assistants typically make?

I think people get impatient. Especially with the economy the way it is, people

are going to have to be more patient and take the right job. Some jobs are a dead end. Chances are your first job isn't going to be one you're going to stay in for 10 or 15 years, so you need to make a good evaluation of the golf course you're going to. Look for a place you can make some improvements, make a name for yourself and stay for about five years.

Some assistants may make a lateral move to another course, and sometimes that may make more sense than moving on to their own course.

The career path is a little slower than it has been and it'll take patience and good investigation and serious consideration before you take a job.

When you hire, how much time do you spend looking at resumes?

We have a scoring system we use to help go through the resumes. We have to – we can get anywhere from 20 to 60 resumes – so we try to evaluate what's on paper based on the criteria we have here. For example if an applicant has zoysiagrass

experience, he gets a point for that, there's a point for working with a certain type of irrigation system and so on.

We pick the people who have the most experience for the criteria we need here. Occasionally, I may have a superintendent from out of the area call me up and tell me about an applicant if he's a really good guy, so that would make a difference.

References are very important. Where they've worked before and done internships is very important and where they went to school is very important.

How many people will you typically interview?

Usually we'll do the top five. I remember one person from this last time we made a hire who didn't get an interview. He called me up and said, “I can't believe I didn't get an interview. I have experience here, a four-year degree – I would have thought I'd at least get an interview.” I said you do have a good resume, experience and education, but there are five



guys with all the same things plus their experience is here in this city, not out of town, so we're interviewing them. Sometimes people don't realize the level of competition out there.

What are some other things you specifically look for on a resume?

I look to see if the person's involved in local and national associations. Where have they worked? Who have they worked for? What's the size of their operation? If someone applied here from a course that plays 5,000 rounds a year, well that's not good experience for us. I need someone who's used to 30,000 rounds.

I look for a handicap – do they play golf? It might not be something that most people put on their resumes, but it's one of those bonus points. If you're going to maintain the course it's important that you play the game. It doesn't mean that you have to be a single-digit handicapper, but you should know the game. As time goes on, you're just more comfortable in the golf course environment if you can play.

What do you know now that you wish you knew early in your career?

There's a certain wisdom that comes with age. I remember not getting a job and it bothered me. I had to step back and realize they were looking for somebody older. I was young. I had all the turf knowledge I needed – or at least I thought I did – but I didn't have a good knowledge of managing people. It was a maturity thing. You don't get the respect when you're younger. That's just a part of it. I wish I would have realized at the time that I just had to age and mature some. That would have probably helped me.

What's the best piece of career advice you've ever received and who did you receive it from?

I worked in the summer of 1974 for Palmer Maples Jr. at the old Standard Club (in Atlanta). He rather sternly pointed his finger at me and told me I should be more observant. I came in early one morning and saw some water in a ditch. I saw it, but didn't think much about it and when I got back to shop everyone was scurrying around to fix a big irrigation leak. His point was that water in the ditch should have gotten my attention because it wasn't normal. You need to see things before they become obvious to others. Our eyes are one of the best tools we have to manage with.

What advice do you have for someone who feels like he's doing all the right



Ken Magnum

things but still hasn't been able to land a superintendent job?

Be patient, but try to network as much as possible so people know who you are. Sometimes it's not who you know, but who knows you.

Sometimes that's difficult from an assistant's standpoint, but it's important to make sure that people who have input into who gets jobs know who you are. That includes USGA people, consultants, leaders in your state association and superintendents in your area.

It's difficult to get that first job. There are a lot of good people out there. And when you do

have the opportunity to interview, do as much homework as you can. Spend a day or two at the golf course before your interview becoming familiar with the course so you can talk with some background knowledge on whatever issue they have. Typically, when there's an opening at a facility, they're looking for something specific – maybe they're not happy with the grass they have, the tree situation, the green conditions. Try to find out what that issue is and be ready to address it.

What's most common question assistants ask you and how do you respond?

It's the more career-oriented things. How do I take that next step?

But turf questions are a good way to get in the door with networking. That's what I did. I tried to bug all the old guys so they'd know who I was. Now I'm the old guy (laughs).

Does that really work?

It does. I actually got one job because the club went to the association, to the biggest turf supplier in the area and to two well known superintendents to ask for recommendations. I was the only common name that all four people gave them. So, yes, it works. **GCI**



NETWORKING AT ITS FINEST BY JOHN EKSTROM

I was fortunate to be invited to the 2009 Green Start Academy (GSA). Being an assistant golf course superintendent and a contributor to this magazine gives me an opportunity to share my experience from an attendees' perspective.

The trip was an enriching experience with education coming from an esteemed group consisting of Bruce Williams, CGCS, Valley Crest Golf Course Maintenance; Ken Mangum, CGCS, Atlanta Athletic Club; Dave Fearis, CGCS, GCSAA; Stan Zontek of the USGA; and Thom Nikolai, Ph.D., Michigan State University.

Dustin Peterson, assistant at the TPC at Deere Run in Silvis, Ill., called the experience "amazing." "The quality of speakers surpassed my greatest expectations," he said, adding that he encourages all assistants to apply next year.

The event's format included dinner and an "ice breaker" at Raleigh Country Club, time spent in the classroom, test areas and laboratories at Bayer's facility in Clayton, N.C., and a tour of the John Deere plant in Fuquay Varina, N.C.

Scientists from Bayer offered insights about current chemistries and some of the latest tools

they're working on. The folks from John Deere showed us two of their walk-behind mowers and we discussed some of the possibilities about future technological advances. It's great to know that companies support us and have the forethought to be looking ahead in gauging the needs of our business in 10 years or more.

One of the greatest aspects of my GSA experience was the opportunity to meet people who are just as passionate about their careers as I am mine. To those who question the strength and integrity of the future of the golf green industry, there's a strong group of people who will be ready to step up and lead when that time comes.

Williams said, "All assistants should have a group of people or network to call in good times and not so good times." Green Start Academy was a great place to network with fellow peers along with the industry professionals. Attendee Matt Dutkiewicz, assistant at Ingersoll Golf Course in Rockford, Ill., said that being invited to GSA is the high point in his career thus far. And I couldn't agree more.

Ekstrom, a GCI Assistant's View columnist, was one of 50 attendees at Green Start Academy, an annual event for elite assistants hosted by John Deere and Bayer Environmental Science last month. For more on Ekstrom's experience, visit the November Online Extras section at golfcourseindustry.com.



PROFESSIONAL PROTOCOL

One Penn State class is shaping the etiquette of tomorrow's golf industry leaders.

BY MEGAN LEONHARDT



Always keep your plate in your left hand so your right hand is free to shake hands. Be on time. Don't have more than three to four appetizers on your plate at any given time. Never order an alcoholic beverage during an interview or the first meeting.

These social rules may be nuances, but when added together, they can change the way both employers and colleagues view an assistant's or superintendent's potential. As the golf industry expands, so do turfgrass managers' personal responsibilities and duties. To better prepare students for these new dynamic situations, Penn State University's Turfgrass Management program requires first-year students to take a class on etiquette called Life Skills for Turfgrass Management.

"While Penn State's program concentrates on turfgrass management, we recognize that in the real world managing turf accounts for only 15 to 20 percent of their job responsibilities," says John Kaminski, assistant professor of turfgrass science at Penn State University. "The majority of

their career will be spent managing and interacting with a diverse group of people. This is why business management, communications skills, human resource management and etiquette play such a prominent role in our program."

Diana Zeisky has been teaching the 16-week course for several semesters. While she calls the course a work in progress, it teaches students more than simple etiquette. Students learn how to conduct themselves with people from all different cultures and backgrounds in various social and business situations.

Zeisky worked as an event planner in New Jersey before she moved and opened a bridal shop in central Pennsylvania. When she was younger, Zeisky attended finishing school where she received etiquette training. She began teaching the classes first to customers of her bridal business, then later expanded to teach within the community and finally at the university level.

The challenge in teaching this class, Zeisky says, is helping the students understand they are more than golf course maintenance workers.



She believes that students need to be able to switch easily from how they interact with their grounds crew to how they should interact with members and employers. She teaches students not only etiquette basics, but also how to present themselves and handle social opportunities such as how to give a great handshake that conveys confidence. For example, a good hand-

shake should have an interlocking "web-to-web grip" (the area between your thumb and index finger), Zeisky says. The handshake should be firm; even if the other person presents a weak grip, do not modify your own.

While Zeisky does not have a background in turfgrass management, she has worked with employers and companies looking to hire for

those positions. She knows what they're looking for in future employees. She says there are still certain fundamentals that people expect to see in leaders, such as social ease and good personal appearance.

SOCIAL GRACES

"This is information that I would teach to anybody and is extremely relevant to the students," Zeisky says. She is always surprised when students cannot present themselves positively to prospective employers. These students will eventually represent the organization they work for and they need to be able to give clients and employers a good impression, Zeisky says.

One of the essential points to providing that impression is the way in which a person conducts himself in a social situation. Leaders, especially superintendents, need to be able to interact with many people from different backgrounds, which is why Zeisky stresses cultural awareness in her class. For example, grounds crews often include Hispanic employees, so she recommends learning a few words in Spanish to find a comfortable level to communicate. It's important to interact with employees without accidentally offending them.

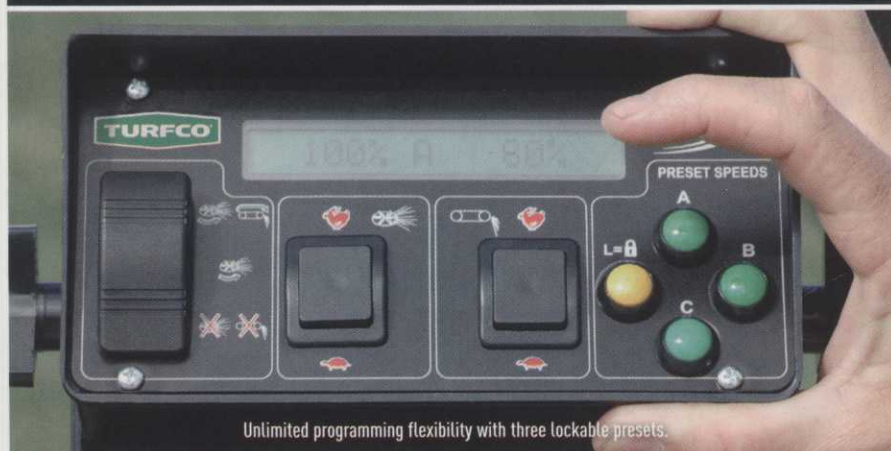
Students also learn how to interact properly with current and future club members, which is another emerging aspect of a superintendent's responsibilities. In these situations, Zeisky says it's all about the physical appearance, demeanor and handshake. While assistants and superintendents should maintain a level of respect, it's a good idea to ask polite questions and give options for feedback on the course and the member's experience.

Early in their careers turfgrass managers may use the pointers about working successfully with their grounds crew more than interacting with members, but it's essential they understand both.

The class also focuses on life skills such as dining manners and protocols. Many of Zeisky's students do not know the subtle dining basics such as correct eating speeds and safe conversational topics, but Zeisky says these aspects are the most important because many meetings take place over meals.

After her class, students feel comfortable and are able to avoid awkwardness. Zeisky believes this skill is so important, the student's final exam is a formal dinner held at the Nittany Lion Inn, a historic colonial inn on Penn State's campus. Here they are tested on all of the dining skills they've learned throughout

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the semester. They need to know everything from how to handle the cutlery to the correct position of a glass. (See "Navigating your place setting" on page 39 for tips.) During the cocktail hour and dinner Zeisky observes how the students are doing. During dinner students are asked questions based on what they've learned and graded accordingly.

Along with the dinner, students must complete an event-planning project. Although the project is only on paper, students are responsible for everything from the guest list to the room set-up. One of Zeisky's students had an internship with Augusta National and the company asked him to plan an event, so his class experience was invaluable.

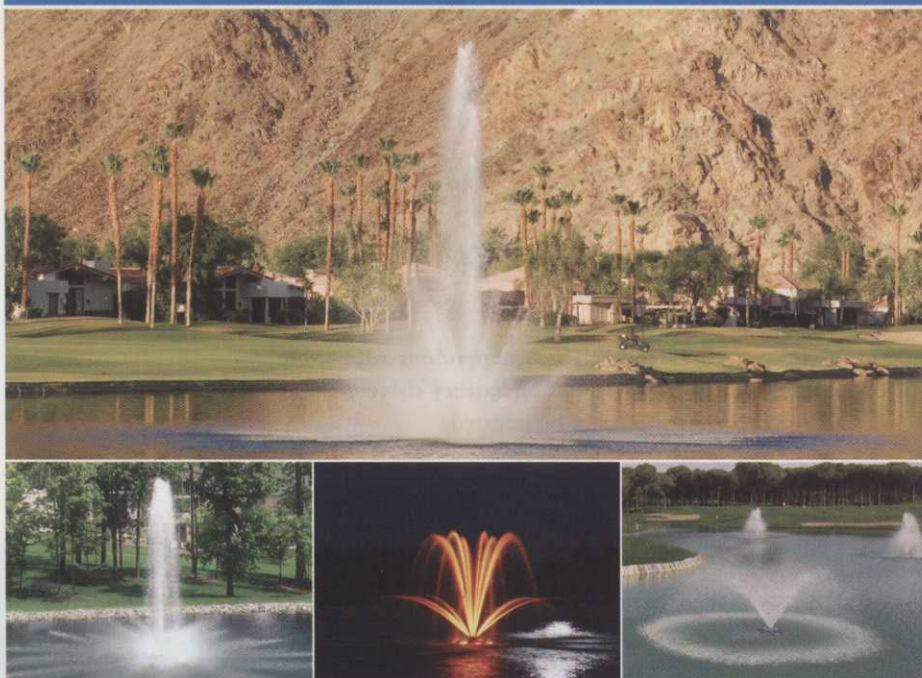
"An etiquette class should be required for all college students," Zeisky says. The goal of the class is to reinforce the ideas that help create a successful personal presentation. That goal can be applied to any major, but it's an especially important goal to set for turf-grass managers – especially in today's volatile marketplace where employees who have good



FIVE TIPS FOR FUTURE SUPERINTENDENTS

- 1 **Know your role and its importance:** Everything from the way you dress to how you carry yourself reflects your attitude. Dress for the next level of employment that you want. Don't think that just because you're part of the grounds crew now that you can be sloppy. Don't downgrade yourself.
- 2 **Make others comfortable:** Etiquette is about making the people around you feel comfortable. An easy way to do this is to maintain an open posture at all times where arms are uncrossed, hands are not in the pockets and your head is up and level with surrounding guests. This will encourage people to approach and mingle with you.
- 3 **Network:** Know how to communicate well with others. You should have a 30- to 40-second speech about yourself ready at all times so that people will remember you. Meeting new people can be one of the most rewarding aspects of any job.
- 4 **Be open to new cultures and experiences:** Interact with all different kinds of people and cultures. Be mindful and respectful of cultural differences. Zeisky recommends reading "Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands" by Terri Morrison and Wayne A. Conaway. The book covers how to respect intercultural relations, greetings and business engagements.
- 5 **Know how to dine:** Know how to keep up with the people around you. Keep pace with your meal without getting too far ahead or behind everyone else. Knowing the right cutlery and manners is important, but more important is knowing how to look professional while dining. Remember dining basics such as not talking with your mouth full and focusing on what your partner is actually saying throughout the conversation.

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communication skills and social graces will have a significant advantage.

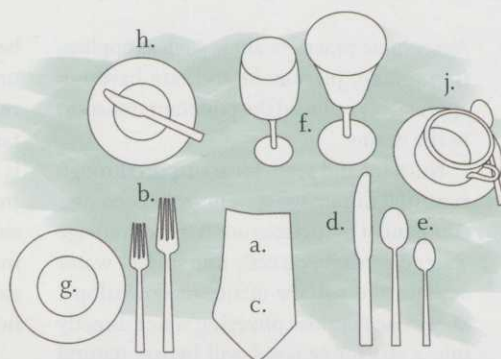
"A lot of it is common sense and I just put it into a package," Zeisky says, adding that the nuances of etiquette are more important than people think. The class benefits future assistants and superintendents and many former students have sent Zeisky e-mails over the years thanking her for the valuable lessons.

"Although students have a hard time recognizing the importance of this class during the semester, it's usually one of the classes that returning alumni say has helped them the most in their career path," Kaminski says.

"In this era of Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites, students need now more than ever to understand proper etiquette and professionalism," he says. "Being able to

grow grass is a given and expected of anyone seeking a superintendent's position. A successful career is going to be more influenced by a student's ability to communicate and interact with others than their ability to grow grass." **GCI**

Leonhardt is a freelance writer based in Medina, Ohio.



NAVIGATING YOUR PLACE SETTING

A handy diagram to prevent you from fumbling with your utensils at conferences and club dinners.

Though the Emily Post Institute considers this place setting an "informal three-course dinner," it's a common arrangement at mid- to upscale restaurants and at formal banquets you may attend at the club or association events where the following menu would be served:

- Soup course
- Salad or first course
- Entrée
- Dessert

The typical place setting includes these utensils and dishes:

a. Dinner plate: This is the 'hub of the wheel' and is usually the first thing to be set on the table. In the illustration, the dinner plate would be placed where the napkin is, with the napkin on top of the plate.

b. Two Forks: The forks are placed to the left of the plate. The dinner fork, the larger of the two forks, is used for the main course; the smaller fork is used for a salad or appetizer. The forks are arranged according to when you need to use them, following an 'outside-in' order. If the small fork is needed for an appetizer or a salad served before the main course, then it's placed on the left (outside) of the dinner fork; if the salad is served after the main course, then the small fork is placed to the right (inside) of the dinner fork, next to the plate.

c. Napkin: The napkin is folded or put in a napkin ring and placed either to the left of the forks or on the center of the dinner plate. Sometimes, a folded napkin is placed under the forks.

d. Dinner knife: The dinner knife is set immediately to the right of the plate, cutting edge facing inward. (If the main course is meat, a steak knife can take the place of the dinner knife.) At an informal meal, the dinner knife may be used for all courses, but a dirty knife should never be placed on the table, place mat or tablecloth.

e. Spoons: Spoons go to the right of the knife. In our illustration, soup is being served first, so the soup spoon goes to the far (outside) right of the dinner knife; the teaspoon or dessert spoon, which will be used last, goes to the left (inside) of the soup spoon, next to the dinner knife.

f. Glasses: Drinking glasses of any kind – water, wine, juice, ice tea – are placed at the top right of the dinner plate, above the knives and spoons.

Other dishes and utensils are optional, depending on what's being served, but may include:

g. Salad plate: This is placed to the left of the forks. If salad is to be eaten with the meal, you can forgo the salad plate and serve it directly on the dinner plate. However,

if the entrée contains gravy or anything runny, it's better to serve the salad on a separate plate to keep things neater.

h. Bread plate with butter knife: If used, the bread plate goes above the forks, with the butter knife placed diagonally across the edge of plate, handle on the right side and blade facing down.

i. Dessert spoon and fork (not pictured): These can be placed either horizontally above the dinner plate (the spoon on top with its handle facing to the right; the fork below with its handle facing left); or beside the plate. If placed beside the plate, the fork goes on the left side, closest to the plate (because it will be the last fork used) and the spoon goes on the right side of the plate, to the right of the dinner knife and to the left of the soup spoon.

j. Coffee cup and saucer: The illustration shows a table setting that's common in an establishment serving many people at once, with coffee being served during the meal. The coffee cup and saucer are placed above and to the right of the knife and spoons. At home, most people serve coffee after the meal. In that case the cups and saucers are brought to the table and placed above and to the right of the knife and spoons.

Source: The Emily Post Institute