



Henry DeLozier, a principal in the Global Golf Advisors consultancy. DeLozier joined Global Golf Advisors in 2008 after nine years as the vice president of golf of Pulte Homes. He is a past president of the National Golf Course Owners Association's board of directors and serves on the PGA of America's Employers Advisory Council.

THE PURSUIT OF GREATNESS

Tiger has a swing coach. Phil has a coach for his short game and a different coach for his full swing. A lot of players have mental coaches. Bubba eschews coaches, but how would anyone know how to coach Bubba? I can only assume that Ian Poulter has a wardrobe advisor, who should be on double-secret probation by now.

Top performers the world over – from athletes to actors to business executives – seek out the people and information that make them better. The goal is the same: continuous improvement.

Leading clubs and golf businesses understand the need for continuous improvement among their employees. They know that green grass is a commodity, sumptuous clubhouses become indistinguishable after you've seen enough of them and you can get the beer only so cold before it freezes.

They realize their people are their most important competitive difference. That's why they invest not only in attracting and retaining the best people, but also in improving their skills. To them, human resource development is an essential element of their strategic plan.

During his spectacular run as manager of the Cincinnati Reds' Big Red Machine, Sparky Anderson often said, "The difference between great managers and good managers is great players." Similarly, top performing clubs understand that key management team members directly impact their financial vitality, their image and their members' satisfaction.

"Having the right team in place gives any golf facility a head start toward increasing its bottom line," says Lyne Tumlinson, who headed the GCSAA's career development program for eight years. "Investing in the development of current employees can facilitate that with less trouble and expense."

Just as every club requires a strategic plan and an annual business plan to guide long-range and near-term decisions, respectively, leading clubs make sure that those plans are executed by professionals dedicated to continuous improvement.

Tumlinson wants to make sure that superintendents don't get overlooked in the pursuit of excellence. To that end, she's launched Career Lift (www.career-lift.com) to support superintendents' career development opportunities.

She suggests that superintendents interested in furthering their careers and making more important contributions to their facilities start with a three-step

self-evaluation.

Think about your own attitudes and behaviors. In general, do people energize you or wear you out? Do you make quick decisions or do you often get stuck gathering more information? Do you prefer to communicate verbally or in writing?

Understand what makes you stand out among your peers and colleagues. What things are you best at?

Decide where you want to be in the next year, five years, 10 years and 20 years with respect to your career, finances, personal relationships, spirituality, health, family and leisure time. Write down your dreams so they get on your radar.

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How should a club's board of directors or senior management go about developing targeted improvement for mid-level managers?

Tumlinson says start with a step-by-step process that gets everyone on the leadership team on the same page and heading the same direction.

"Reaching the ultimate goal requires working together toward the mission and vision of the golf facility, by providing the right level of conditioning for the member, golfer or customer," she says.

Tumlinson suggests coaching each professional on the team individually and as part of a group to identify strengths, improve communication, clarify roles, strengthen relationships and motivate.

"The differences between coached and un-coached managers are often plain to see in their attitudes," Tumlinson says. "Coaching is all about transformation – both inside a person and externally – so those who are open to change through feedback can demonstrate more evidence of positive development." **GCI**