



AN EQUIPMENT MANAGER'S VALUE

The golf course mechanic whom we all used to know and love is quietly fading away. The industry is replacing him with the modern-day equipment technician, or as I favor, the equipment manager. The role these individuals play within the golf course maintenance arena is often under appreciated, as they play an ever increasing role in the overall conditioning and management of the facility.

No single individual can take credit for the performance, presentation and conditioning of the golf course. It takes a team to make it happen. A successful team is made up of individuals who do their job, not because they have to, but because they want to. To say they take pride in their work is an understatement. They do whatever it takes to reach their goals and simply make it happen.

At the end of the day these individuals also recognize the importance of everyone's contributions, not only in their own success but to the overall success of the team and the facility.

The golf course superintendent plays a critical role developing the property into its full potential, but it's the equipment manager who leaves the team's signature on it when the day's work is done. This role factors into whether a member or customer returns to play again or makes it their last call.

Bearing the responsibility for more than \$1 million dollars in rolling stock is no small task. It takes every piece of that equipment that they are responsible for to fulfill the day's assignments. The various disciplines required to manage the modern golf course equipment fleet are quite varied and extremely technical in nature.

The equipment manager is the point man for everything from two-cycle, small engines, diesel, hydraulics, electrical, fuel systems, preventative maintenance schedules and most importantly, cutting units. And that's just the equipment.

Maintaining good preventative maintenance saves a golf course facility hundreds of thousands of dollars in purchases of new equipment, time lost to repairs, lost efficiencies from poor equipment performance and subpar conditioning and presentation on the course.

As the name implies, the equipment manager is much more than a skilled mechanic. They not only

maintain the fleet, but they play a critical role in the concept of Total Shop Management.

Total Shop Management encompasses everything from spatial development of the equipment warehouse, ordering and managing parts inventories, fuel reserves and managing staff within the shop proper. More times than not they will serve as the lead trainer for new equipment operators.

Maintaining good preventative maintenance can potentially save a facility hundreds of thousands of dollars in purchases of new equipment, time lost to repairs, lost efficiencies from poor equipment performance and subpar conditioning and presentation on the course.

Every aspect of their performance – from the equipment, Total Shop Management, training staff or managing inventories – impacts the bottom line. In the “new normal” that we have all found ourselves operating under, doing more with less is the standard. Running a golf course is running a business. More often than not it is big business. Without a doubt, the equipment manager has become the most critical link in a golf course's management team.

As many of you are aware, qualified technicians are in high demand within the industry. There are more jobs than there are qualified technicians to fill them. Many of the staff members on a golf course's maintenance team have alternates who can fulfill their duties in the event of an absence. This isn't always the case with equipment managers because they are the only individuals who have the full skillset to complete the tasks they are charge with. And with no equipment, no work will get done.

Equipment managers are critical to the operation of any modern golf course. No longer are they “just the mechanic.” Instead, they are the valuable, key members of the team. Equipment managers – we need you and we thank you for all you do. **GCI**