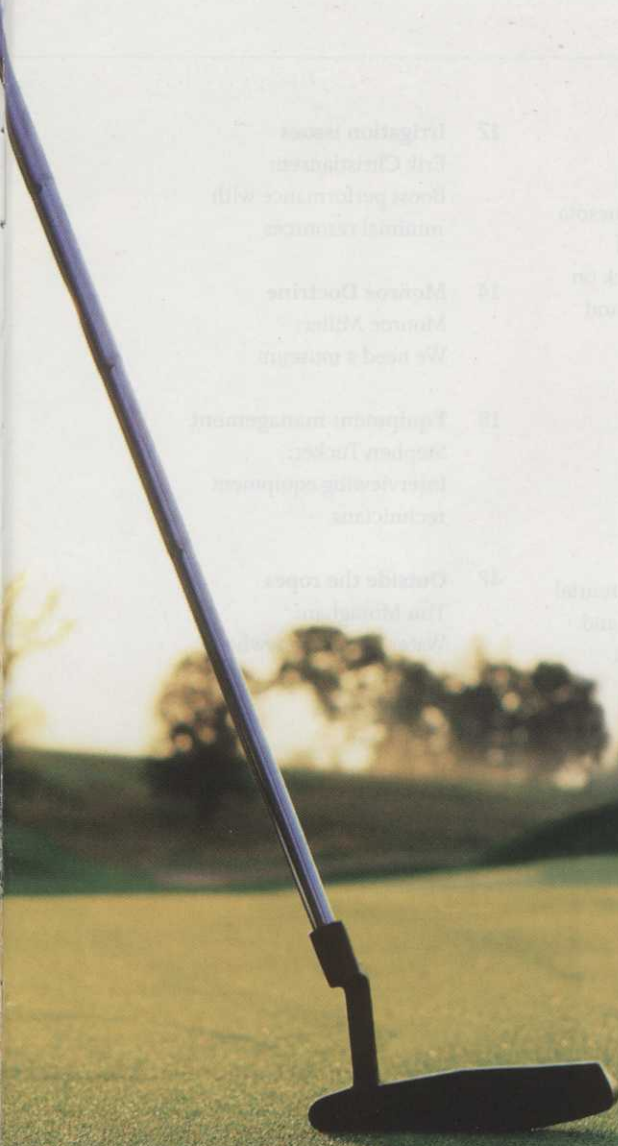




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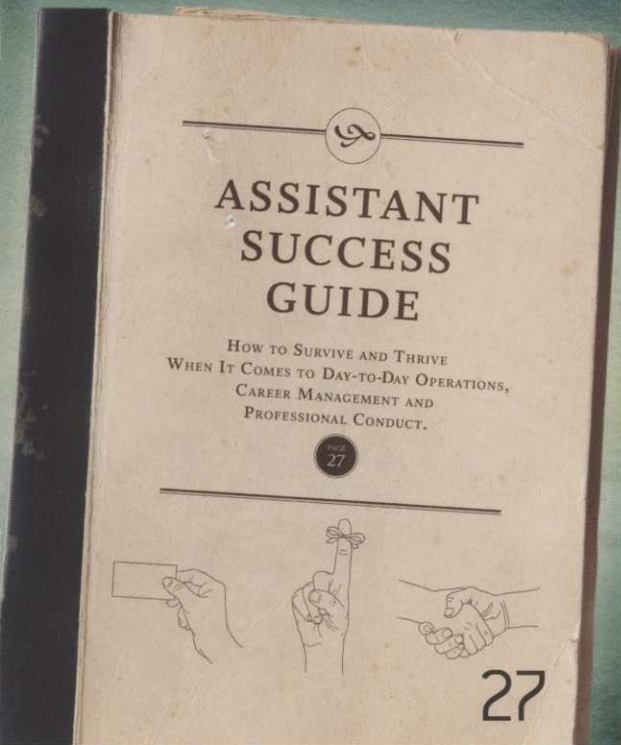
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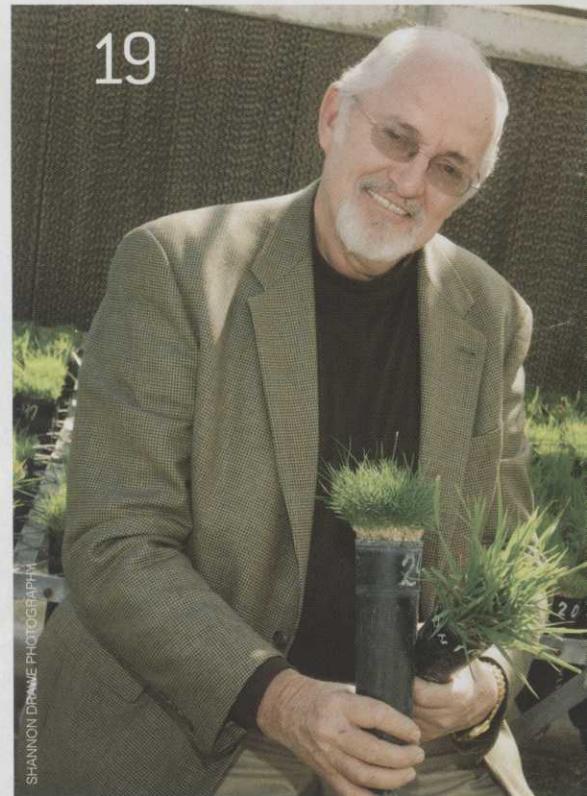
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We'd like to hear from you.

E-mail us at gci@gie.net with your thoughts and opinions.

Personal responsibility

I read Mr. Schuknecht's piece in the October issue (page 16) and had to thank him for his insight and willingness to call us all to be personally responsible. His assessment that we alone are responsible for how we handle adversity, how we chose to act and react is spot on. It's not the drive to shine the light on oneself that matters, it's being able to give that energy to others that makes true champions. He should take heart in knowing that this ability to be honest and having the fortitude to call others into action will serve him well as he advances on his chosen career path.

Ron Dahlin, CGCS
The Meadows Golf Club
at Grand Valley State University
Allendale, Mich.

Weathering the storm

That was a great Q&A with Dean Graves (October, page 20). I'm impressed he has weathered the storm of this industry so

well and is successful. He's been a great communicator and handled the PR and politics well. We need more like him. Hopefully, young assistants or those currently in college will read Pat Jones' article and take it to heart. Well done!

John C. Cummings, CGCS
Elkview, W.V.

Traveling man

I find that the Travels with Terry columns are one of the most informative pieces in Golf Course Industry magazine. They often help me out. Thanks to Terry Buchen.

Mark Martinez
Golf course superintendent
Scherwood Golf Course
Schererville, Ind.

Cheers for Michigan

I'm a native Michigander and my blood runs green. A few of us golf course architects left

the state at one time or another and at times wonder why we did. I'm extremely partial to Michigan and thanks to Monroe Miller's article (August, page 14) for touching on golf, MSU, turf and notable players, supers and architects in the state for making me proud.

John Harvey, ASGCA, ASLA
Golf Course Architect
The RBA Group, Inc.
Parsippany, N.J.

Thanks to Monroe Miller for writing about "good news from Michigan" (August, page 14). Many of the names you had mentioned have been pioneers for this industry and people I have looked up to throughout my career. They represent what this part of the industry is all about: Helping others. Golf has been fortunate to have these individuals, as well as others, be caretakers of the game.

Daniel J. Bissonette
Golf course superintendent
Walloon Lake Country Club
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CRINGEWORTHY

The other day a superintendent responded to an e-mail I sent him with the one-liner that sends shudders down my spine. For me, it's like the sound of nails on a chalkboard or the thought of chewing on tissue. It's just plain cringeworthy.

"Your welcome," the superintendent wrote.

Many of you are cringing yourselves. The rest of you are probably scratching your heads, wondering what's wrong. Those of you in the latter group are missing the point, and it may be hurting your careers. Why? It's "you're welcome." Always. It's never, ever "your welcome."

Again, many of you – most of you, hopefully – know this. The rest of you likely fire off grammatically incorrect notes on a daily basis that make you look sloppy at best.

People at all levels of the business world are guilty of grammatical incorrectness – it's not just the occasional superintendent. It's my coworkers (not fellow editors, though!), marketing practitioners and personal acquaintances. It's older folks, middle-aged people and young professionals, too. Although those who've come of age texting, Facebooking, Tweeting are entering

the workforce more grammatically challenged than the generations before them (soon we'll be worrying about the widespread use of "ur welcome").

You may be thinking that proper grammar doesn't matter because it doesn't affect how well you grow grass or manage a budget. You're wrong.

Grammar is about credibility. If your resume and cover letter are fraught with *yours* that should be *you're's* or *theres* that should be *theirs*, it reflects poorly on you and it might prevent you from landing an interview. Potential employers know that grammatical mistakes may reflect several things: You're careless, you're not well educated or you're unprofessional. Any or all of these may mean you have other bad habits, you're not detail-oriented or that you'd present badly at green committee meetings or in your interactions with owners. You don't want any of those assumptions being made about you, do you?



Marisa Palmieri Senior editor

As a takeaway message, I offer my Most Cringeworthy Grammar Mistakes List:

YOUR/YOU'RE

- *Your* is a possessive pronoun ("your course").
- *You're* is a contraction for *you are* ("you're welcome"). Contractions are easy if you remember that the apostrophe replaces the omitted letter. In *you're*, the apostrophe replaces the *a* in *are*, which is why it's always "you're welcome."

PLURALS & POSSESSIVES

- In almost all cases, you make words plural by adding an *s* or *ies*. Apostrophes don't make words plural; they indicate possessiveness.

Hence, the plural of *employee* is *employees*, not *employee's*.

- To make a singular word possessive, simply add an apostrophe ("crew's equipment").
- It gets tricky when the word ends in *s*. For proper nouns like names, add an apostrophe ("Russ' computer"). Add an *'s* to make a singular common noun possessive ("boss's plan"). However, if the next word starts with an *s*, only add an apostrophe ("boss' schedule").

THERE/THERE/THEY'RE

- *There* refers to a place ("over there"). This may be a silly way to remember it, but an English teacher once taught me that *there* refers to a place, and both words end in the letter *e*.

• *Their* is a plural possessive pronoun ("their house"). Again, a weird tip: *Their* refers to people, it contains the letter *i* and I am a person.

- *They're* is a contraction for "they are." In *they're*, the apostrophe replaces the letter *a* in *are*.

IT'S/ITS

- *It's* is a contraction for *it is*. ("It's my job.")
- *Its* is a possessive pronoun, which means it functions like other pronouns such as *his*, *her* and *their*. ("The mower was at the end of its life.")

Got it? Now that we have that settled, I feel much better. You're welcome. **GCI**

Marisa Palmieri

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Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

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Tavis Horton is an assistant superintendent at Birmingham Country Club in Michigan. He can be reached at horton31@aol.com.

GETTING INVOLVED

I believe learning takes place everywhere – not just at work, but within your local or national association, church, community group or athletic team. It all comes under the heading of getting involved.

Getting involved is an excellent way to prepare you for the next level of being a golf course superintendent. By getting involved in golf industry initiatives you develop relationships with peers, superintendents, industry partners, golf course owners, managers and industry leaders who can serve as important connections in your career. Begin by getting involved with your local association. This involvement:

- Reflects your well-roundedness. Involvement in your local association shows employers that your skills extend beyond work.
- Provides you with unlimited opportunities to gain life and industry experiences, such as planning an event, running a meeting or building a team.
- Improves your time management skills. When you get involved in activities, you have more things to juggle and your time management skills improve.
- Improves your personal growth in areas such as leadership, interpersonal communications, problem solving and confidence.
- Secures future references. Networking develops relationships with other leaders who can assist you in your career development.
- Allows you to learn from association activities by sharing ideas and discussing industry trends that you can pass on to your team.

I have been an active member in my association for the last 10 years and I'm proud to be serving as an elected member of the Board of Directors of the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association (MiGCSA). My experience has provided me with many opportunities to gain an understanding of statewide governance, the issues affecting the golf industry locally and nationally, and the role of politics in our industry. I'm very fortunate to have 12 superintendents on the board as mentors who support my involvement and respect my opinion in board discussions.

Assistants who demonstrate leadership abilities have a leg up on the competition, especially when competing against hundreds of applicants for that one superintendent position. I recently applied for a superintendent position and found myself competing against 125 other applicants. I wondered if I was going to receive an interview, or at the very least be noticed as a strong assistant among a list of qualified individuals. Unfortunately, I did not get the job but I did get an interview. Leadership qualities are in demand and I truly believe this is what made me stand out from the other qualified applicants.

Involvement in community groups can incorporate many of the beneficial activities described above, such as building connections with other people, learning new things and volunteering your time. From sporting teams and faith-based groups to rotary clubs and athletic teams, there are many options for broadening your skills. If you're looking to make new friends, learn something new or gain or polish leadership skills, getting involved is a great way to accomplish these goals.

Getting involved has allowed me to interact with great people with different personal and professional backgrounds whether from being a member on the MiGCSA board, volunteering at my daughter's school, writing articles for GCI or playing on my hockey team. At the end of the day, balance of family, work and extracurricular activities is crucial so make sure you have the time, passion and resources to make it an effective endeavor. **GCI**

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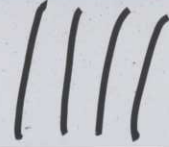


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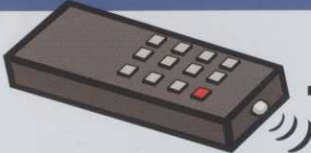
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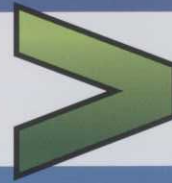
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