

Expert Details Inch-by-Inch His Yard-stick for Measuring Manager

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THE time has come when clubs must be merchandised just as other businesses are. The profits which accrued to the departmental side of the club's business by virtue of the existence of its bar can no longer be counted on. It is because of this fact, together with a natural desire for more economical prices and better financial results, that methods of efficiency and system have been introduced into club management. Keeping these things in mind it must be realized that the selection of a manager is no small task, and not to be taken lightly as is too often the case, with dire results.

Before you can apply your yardstick you must, of course, have the material to measure and I would say a few words with regard to the methods which you should use in obtaining the candidate for the position.

You can, of course, advertise in newspapers and trade journals. These methods are convenient and have merit. You can also interview men of whom you have heard of by reputation, but be sure that those who are recommending these same men are not doing so in order to relieve themselves of a bad bargain. The only other source of supply which we know of worth giving consideration to is by directing inquiries to the Club Managers' Association of America which maintains a bureau for this very purpose and goes over material with a fine-tooth comb before making recommendations.

If you wanted a professional for your club, the logical place to go would be to the P. G. A., obtaining its list and then making your selection with regard for your special needs. If you wanted a good orchestra and you were not particularly skilled in music yourself, the opinions of those who were engaged in that profession would certainly be worthwhile, and be more apt to lead you in the right direction.

So it is in the securing of managerial material. When an association sets up a standard of ethics in order to elevate and

improve the calibre of its members you can be pretty certain that from its ranks you are going to be able to secure the best possible kind of material.

Manager's Essentials

He should be neat and dignified. His should be not necessarily a cold dignity, for a ready smile and a pleasant manner is essential in his dealing with the membership. He must have personality that begets confidence and respect, not only from his membership but from employes as well.

Education to my mind is essential and the more education the better. I mean by that the education of schools or a college, or its equivalent in self-education by contact with those who are educated and by reading and study. The man must have the ability to carry on an interesting conversation on current topics, and particularly should he be familiar with those subjects in which his club's membership is interested. On the other hand, he should not be too talkative so as to be a bore or to the degree that his manner seems intrusive. He should be a gentleman, polished, refined and cultured with the ability to meet all those with whom he comes in contact on an equal footing, at the same time having the delicacy and judgment not to overstep the bounds.

Dealing, as he does, with problems often delicate which may have grave results, diplomacy must be his by instinct. I should also add tact, good breeding and



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a sense of humor. Certainly a sense of humor is a necessity in the business which deals with the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of such a cross section as is found in the average club.

His record for honesty and integrity must be above question, and this information is obtained through a rigid inspection of his references and by correspondence or conversation with those by whom he has been formerly employed.

His actions and his bearing must be such as to command respect of members and the immediate obedience of his subordinates. He must be conscientious to the nth degree and regard to the number of hours which he devotes to his work should be of secondary importance to him in his desire to obtain the best results. To the real manager, his work is a hobby and it should be his greatest interest in life. I do not fear contradiction when I say that the majority of the best managers in this country are in the business because they love it.

Generally, I would say, therefore, that the man of your selection in this first unit of measurement will be one who gives a pleasant first impression as to personality and his measurement of character will be obtained by investigation.

Organizing Ability Vital

The man you are seeking will be an organizer, not merely an executive who can take an already made organization and make it function, but one who can, when necessary, attend to his own organizing along sound business lines. He must be a judge of labor (of men and women), have a knowledge of each and every job that his employes must fill, have the ability to efficiently plan the duties of the organization and see that the work of each is carried out to a satisfactory conclusion. He must also know how to make his organization function as a machine, automatically and in such a way that subordinate spare parts are ready and able to step in when needed for instant replacement. How many organizations can you think of where everything goes beautifully while the various heads of departments are on the job, and then when a man is out sick without advance notice everything goes wrong because that man had a special part to perform and that performance is now lacking? That type of organization is weak and does not come up to the standard which the ideal manager would hope to attain. You will find

that this is the greatest weakness in most club organizations, that in other words, there is no real organization. The man who will meet your standard must know the systems of organization, methods of delegating responsibility and authority, and the laying out of the work to be accomplished.

As an executive, he must know how to deal properly with those under his command in order to obtain their willing cooperation and the desire to please which comes through proper handling of the modern employe. This manager will realize that alone he cannot succeed, but only through the combined efforts of each and every employe whose interests, loyalty and enthusiasm he has gained, and that through this combination only can success be achieved.

The desirable manager will be the man who gives the impression immediately of being thoroughly alert and familiar with business practice, who has executive and technical ability, one who can give you a direct answer to your question without hedging or stalling, ever ready to make his decision, and standing or falling on the result. In order to obtain this measurement you must be guided partly by your judgment or impression of the man during your conference with him, by the type of letter that he writes, by his record of past experience, but chiefly by his reaction to questions that you will ask him, and the readiness with which he may reply as the questions are put. There are many questions which your committee members may ask which do not require a technical knowledge of club management, but which may concern your own club and your own experiences, particularly those experiences which have been unpleasant and which have led you to contemplate this change in management.

The Club, Not You, Governs

Do not judge your applicant on the basis of whether his solution of the problem is one that meets with your personal approval, but rather whether it offers a proper solution for the club's best interests.

I can recall at this time a club where things had disintegrated to a great extent because the manager was one of those with a weak backbone, unable to give orders and see them carried out by his kitchen crew.

One of the committee members in interviewing the applicant for the manager's

position put this question, "If you had instructed your chef that during the meal hour when the demand was heavy to have potatoes for baking put in the oven every 15 minutes so that they would come out in proper condition at frequent intervals, if you found that your orders were not carried out, what would you do?" The manager instantly replied, "If I found that my chef would not take orders, I would get a new one who would." Naturally that was the correct answer. Another question was asked, "If you were buying what you supposed to be 30 per cent cream, and you were paying for that, and the cream was of an inferior quality, not averaging the proper percentage, what would you do?" The answer, of course, is to do business with a concern that is reputable and dispensing with those who do not live up to their agreement.

There are many questions concerning your own club and its problems to which your applicant may give you solution in the course of your interview if he is the right type of man, and it is upon these that you will judge his fitness for the position, namely, his ability as an executive and organizer and his fitness to head an organization.

Must Know Housekeeping

It is most important that your manager must know the hotel side of club operation. By this I mean the technical side of the business, and in these subjects he must have a broad knowledge. He must know the system employed and the operation and administration of the front office, of bookkeeping and accounting, the routine and duties for clerks, bellboys, locker-room boys, and all the various classes of employes, he must know housekeeping in all its details, and to my mind this is one of the most important of his many jobs. This housekeeping phase of club operation means the upkeep, the cleanliness and the appearance of your property, and it is in this phase that we who have inspected many clubs find that managers fall down much to the club detriment. He must direct his purchasing department, and understand the systems and method of purchasing in every detail. He must know laundering, mending, cleansing, systems required for the proper control of linen in the linen rooms for use in the various departments so as to prevent losses and damage and theft. He must be familiar with the purchasing of rugs, furniture and general supplies and his understanding in

these matters must be based on a knowledge of quality, price and desirability. He should know something of the manufacture and care of these items. He must have the characteristics of the housewife and a knowledge of housecleaning, and, most important, an eye for cleanliness which immediately recognizes by instinct that which is not in proper condition.

I could go on indefinitely regarding the housekeeper's phase of a club manager's work, but those I have mentioned are of sufficient importance to indicate something of the technical knowledge required.

The question of upkeep is closely allied with housekeeping, and this includes a knowledge of painting, decoration, electrical work, machinery, carpentering, upholstery and some smattering of architecture and construction.

I recently talked with the chairman of the house committee of a new club in the east. His manager was replaced after the first two years, and I am told that he had neglected the upkeep of the property to an extent which was making it necessary for the club to spend thousands of dollars this year to put it back in condition, and a large portion of this could have been saved by following out the old adage, "A stitch in time saves nine."

The importance of architecture and construction in the manager's repertoire of knowledge is important so that he may assist in the drawing of plans and construction of lay-out of a new club or for the reconstruction of old club, thus saving through his technical knowledge and experience thousands of dollars which might otherwise be wasted as we have found in many cases. Many a club and hotel, too, would have saved vast sums of money spent because of breakage and the necessity of maintaining a greater number of employes, and all of the other costly difficulties which arise because of inefficient planning if a skilled manager had been consulted in regard to the plans in the first place.

(To be continued.)

Clear evidence of the development of the women's game comes in the revision of women's par by the Women's Western Golf Association. Women's Western par beginning in 1931 will be:

Up to and including 200 yards, par three; 201 yards to 375 yards, par four; 376 yards and up, par five. It is expected the U. S. G. A. women's par soon will be revised.