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## College Courses Help the Pro Check Business Operation

By SAM RAUWORTH

The article about my golf school published in 1947 in GOLF DOM ("What Makes Sammy's Golf School Run?") concluded with a rosy picture of my triumph over the Dragon of Financial Trouble, well satisfied with my work . . . all in all, like the ending to a Western movie, with the handsome hero riding off into the sunset.

Well, it turned out to be quite a sunset. Someone kept burning trash in the alley near our building despite repeated warning and on July 28th, 1949 it happened . . . the heat cracked the window and a strong wind blew the flames inside. The interior of the entire golf school burned. Despite insurance, my loss was over \$1500. I limped along for the rest of the season, giving golf lessons at the golf range and stocking and selling clubs from my home. Since the

contractor estimated November 1, 1949 for completion, I decided to go back to Northwestern in the fall for another semester in Commerce. It is just as well that I did; the golf school was not ready for occupancy until January, the studying kept my mind out of my troubles, and the training was to help me come back stronger than ever this year.

So here I was, on a gray day in January, trying to get the golf school in shape, hanging golf nets, sanding floors and planning a golf display, when two fellows walked in to look at golf clubs. I laid aside the hammer and waited on them in paint-smearing coveralls. When the sale was completed (one of my better sales talks, I guess), one fellow remarked:

"You could do a lot with this place . . . the basic structure is good. We would like to give you an overall plan and a few sketches. We're both designers and this place is an interesting challenge."

I scratched my head a bit, and said, "I'm none too flush financially, but if you want to give me a sketch, maybe we can work something out."

When I saw the detailed plan, analyzing how the activities of teaching, buying, selling and bookkeeping would be considered in the design, Reynard & Majewski had another client.

Here are the basic ideas presented to me. The school should have a friendly but business-like atmosphere. Design would follow function; they would make the plan to fit the importance and frequency of activities. The business area would be painted a cocoa color to set it off from the teaching area, which would be a soft yellow and blue-green. It sounded a bit gaudy, but I knew my own conservatism as far as color was concerned so I said, OK. To help me get my club sales back up to par, I insisted that we start on the club display first.

My contribution to the design of the club display was based mainly on hard-headed selling ideas that I'd learned in the Retail Store management course at Northwestern University plus principals of retail display commonly known in the trade.



The office area shown above shows the desk built by the designers, metal filing cabinet, bulletin board, lesson schedules and forced-air gas heater. One of the doors on the designer-built desk hinges upward to form a writing surface, and the portable typewriter swings into writing position on a hinged top section, much like a sewing machine. In the front golf net, the practice clubs are held from the floor by spring clips.

What I Wanted	How the Designers Accomplished It
1) A mass display to suggest sufficient stock and wide assortment.	The "L" display masses the clubs directly in front of the customer as he enters the door.
2) Heads of the clubs displayed at eye-level.	Woods on top shelf, head down; irons on bottom shelf, head up.
3) Flexibility, so I could display clubs in or out of the boxes.	Removable pegs to allow flexibility; put them in to display clubs individually, take them out to display clubs in boxes.
4) Appeal, so that the customer could walk up and handle clubs.	Display placed on easy slant, with ample kick-space underneath.
5) To make sure that the display didn't outshine the golf clubs.	Display was painted the same flat cocoa color as the wall.

Since we have class lessons, we wanted an obvious place for students to wait, if they were early, and an obvious place for them to put coats, hats and shoes. Last year, I had a great deal of trouble keeping clothes off the chairs and keeping shoes from being spread all over the place.

We placed the sitting area opposite the club display (so they could look at clubs while waiting) and placed the clothes rack and shoe rack next to the sitting area. The cocktail table was built of birch, plywood

and glass to hold magazines and ash trays and allow clubs to be placed across the two birch rails protecting the glass. The grass green shag rug and red Duran-covered chairs provide a bright spot in contrast with the walls.

The results were satisfying. Having a place for everything and everything in its place is paying off. The students put their own coats and shoes in the racks and despite heavy lesson booking, the school looks neat most all the time, without constant fussing and straightening up.

#### Application of Principles Learned in Courses at Northwestern University

##### PRINCIPLES

##### HOW APPLIED

###### Business Organization Course

1) Analyze business by functions whether or not these functions are now being performed. Function defined as activity or group of activities clearly set apart from others.

2) Set policies on the basis of facts but adapt as conditions change.

3) Set responsibilities definitely and be sure to give authority equal to tasks required.

Functions analyzed in school as follows: Policy and Administration, Instruction, Buying and Selling, Record Keeping and Maintenance.

Consistent but flexible policies established as to lesson and club prices, return of merchandise, credit on lessons missed, etc.

Assistants must accept responsibility for booking lessons, knowing club prices, collecting fees, running school when owner is absent. They have authority to make decisions within area of policies established.

###### Industrial Management Course

1) Good lighting improves work in manufacturing; helps sales in retailing. General overhead lighting best for most purposes. Fluorescent: low operating cost, high initial cost. Incandescent: higher operating cost but lower original cost.

2) Mechanization requires higher capital outlay but allows employee to do more work. With sufficient volume, cost curve goes down.

Overhead incandescent installed: low original cost, operating cost not much of a factor, light is "warmer" than fluorescent. General area lighting with no deep shadows.

Purchased REXAIRE Vacuum cleaner to keep floors and golf nets dust-free; typewriter, adding machine and file cabinet to make record keeping fast and easy.

###### Retail Store Management Course

1) Allow easy access to merchandise not easily stolen or damaged.

2) Keep adequate control of stock to assure good turnover but avoid running out of stock.

Display placed in prominent place to invite customer to pick up merchandise.

Past three years' sales analyzed and an expected sales curve projected, allowing for seasonal factor. "Open-to-buy" formula applied (in a very simple, informal way) to control buying.

## Sales Administration Course

1) Present sales theory is to find what buyer wants, then merely provide these things. High-pressure selling is less productive, increases selling costs, and creates no repeat business.

2) Know whether your product falls in the specialty, shopping or convenience goods class and shape your selling to fit.

## Personnel Course

1) Provide financial and non-financial incentives to employees. Non-financial incentives that have ranked higher than pay received in several surveys: Self expression, interesting work.

2) Know job specifications so employees can be picked on the basis of facts.

3) Fractionalize work so that it is easier to find employees who can do the job. If the job takes too many skills, it may take a genius to fill it.

## Advertising Course

1) "Expert" advertising men are not as good a judge of your advertising as the potential buyer; that is, the guy who wants to get rid of a slice.

2) The market must be analyzed to avoid advertising waste.

Type of customer analyzed: mostly business girls and men of middle income group. Prices, activities and advertising appeal adapted to these facts. No advertising in exclusive suburbs, for instance.

Golf clubs seem to be shopping goods; people do not buy them at the closest store like cigarettes (convenience goods), nor travel to a certain store for a certain brand, like Steuben glass (specialty goods). They "shop" prices and quality, demand retailer be in an area convenient for such shopping.

Financial incentives in paying different hourly rate for instruction than regular work plus percentage on club sales. Chief non-financial incentive is allowing employee to find self-expression in his work.

Instructors picked for teaching ability, pleasant manner, potential sales ability, willingness. Golf bums definitely avoided.

Because business is not yet large enough to allow full time employment of specialists, part-time specialists in teaching, selling, bookkeeping, maintenance have been sought out. Both instructors are students; part-time work is a fine set-up for them and for me.

Copy is aimed, in plain language, at our logical prospects. "Corny" phrases, of proven selling appeal, are kept.

Golf seems to be a "thin" market, so mass "shotgun" advertising is often a waste. People qualify themselves as prospects when they look in the classified phone book so that is our best result-getting medium.

## What Are the Results?

First, the design work of Reynard & Majewski is paying off in good ole dollars and cents. Students and club prospects comment (voluntarily) on the appearance of the school. The neat, cheerful atmosphere "pre-sells" merchandise; the customer seems to think, "... school looks good; merchandise must be good." The colors even help me in teaching; after an 11 or 12 hour day, I'm much less tired.

I think there were four unusual things about this design work: 1) These fellows have a commercial sense. They accepted my modifications of their designs when they saw the selling sense behind the suggested change; 2) They are not "arty". Both are craftsmen, both temper their enthusiasm for modern design by a down-to-earth realism; 3) The work was planned in an overall way, but worked out in a step-by-step manner, as I could afford it; 4) The design was worked out by function. What is done here? How often do you use

this space? Now we are doing more work with less effort. Previous commitments this spring prevented them from taking on jobs offered to them (one prominent Chicago pro wanted them to come out to his shop) but I'm certain they would do a fine job, even in the limited area of most pro shops. As a matter of fact, they make use of space most of us wouldn't even see.

Second, what are the overall results of the designing job and the book "Iarnin".

We are booked as tight as we can be on lessons. Two of the three instructors are busy every night of the week and on Saturday. About 350 lessons per month is a fair estimate for peak months of March thru July. Last year, we ran over 1700 lessons for the year and this year, barring fire or other calamity, we should have 10 to 15% increase. Our club sales, at present rate, should fall between \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Of the other factors . . . we have a good atmosphere at the club, a relaxed but

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## COLLEGE COURSES HELP

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efficient working team . . . we are getting almost 30% of our lessons by recommendation. Our club sale policy of being absolutely honest with the customer has built confidence; we now sell many sets (by phone), merely on our recommendation. Management policies are simple and effective enough that the school functions just as well when I'm away as when I'm there.

### What of the Future?

Our growth curve has just about flattened out; lack of space limits further expansion of lessons, though club sales could be increased. Our main concern, however, is not increasing business during the peak, but stimulating business during the off season.

The club I started for golf students may help accomplish this. This club was established when I realized that lessons were only part of the job of instruction. So many beginners, especially women, take lessons, buy clubs and still do not play golf. Several factors work against the student who does not belong to a country club, who cannot play golf on weekdays, and has no automobile. These factors are:

1) I'm afraid to go on the course alone; 2) I'm afraid to play with friends . . . they're too good to want me tagging along; 3) I have no car to get out to less crowded outlying courses. Here is a new student faced with the dismal prospect of trying to play golf for the first time without guidance, on week-ends, on the crowded courses served by street cars.

Our club tries to meet this problem in this way: We meet in the city about 9 A.M. Sunday at a golf driving range easily reached by public transportation; from this meeting spot, those who haven't cars ride to the golf course with members fortunate enough to own an automobile. We use a "big brother" system to start the new players. Each beginner is assigned a sponsor who is to show him where to buy the tickets, where to stand, advise what club to use, and . . . great day . . . something about golf etiquette. Often I advise them to play alternate shots on one ball to speed play.

This "every one teach one" method is working surprisingly well; new players usually report enjoyment instead of disappointment on their very first golf game. We are most proud of getting timid people, of marginal golfing ability, on the golf course: once or twice with patient encouragement and they have been "had" . . . the golf bug's got them, and they are then confident enough to play on their own. Last year, we had one of these golf events each month, but since the club is now about 150 members, we are running additional smaller events almost every week-end, at courses that can be reached by street car. To avoid crowds, these events are often scheduled for twilight golf.

Members enjoy the sociability of these golf events so much that we are planning indoor events for them this year, to include canasta, bridge, shuffleboard, dancing, ping-pong and general get-togethers for plain fun. If these events can be made interesting enough to attract and hold members during the fall and winter, we may be able to flatten out the income curve of the golf school.

The success of the school and of the club for beginners seems to indicate that a real need is being met. This same promotional idea could be used on a small public fee golf course; I'd certainly like to try it, even on a run-down (but basically sound) golf course. The beginner has been much maligned by players, but it is the beginner who buys new clubs, takes lessons, and pays the fees. A course with a program to help the beginner (especially women . . . even providing a supervised playground for children so the mother is free to play golf) could become a course that would make profits week-days as well as on week-ends and holidays.



Full view of main reception area in Rauworth's club showing merchandising display as designed by Reynard and Majewski. Club racks and fixtures for hanging bags put clubs and bags within easy reach of prospective buyer. Note racks are designed to provide ample storage space behind display. Ceiling lights are high to avoid breakage. Driving areas at either end of club are provided with three-way outlet allowing either regular or ultra violet light with timer to avoid over-exposure. Lights above display racks are on swivels to allow spotting certain merchandise.