

selling conversation. Perhaps an incentive plan is one answer. A plan such as this would entail a commission on sales of certain items, which must be sold. In other words, a member usually does not ask for these items, and if he buys them he must be sold them.

Another suggestion is that you spend time with your assistant teaching him the psychology of selling. If he intends to stay in the golf business and eventually get a pro job of his own, this would be a tremendous help to him later and a big help to you when you need it most. If you find that he has no aptitude for selling, then for good business reasons you should make a change. Selling is a most important part of your operation and you must have qualified help to do it.

Remember that salesmanship is of extreme importance to you. Most good salesmen have been trained in the art of selling. Spend some time with your assistants . . . let them get in on the buying of merchandise and give them an incentive to sell it.

The Importance of Buying

I was made aware of the importance of buying some time ago when I found that a friend who is a buyer for a department store in Miami is paid more than \$35,000 a year. In order to pay a man a salary such as this, the store puts a premium on the skill of buying merchandise wisely. I feel that buying is as important as selling. If you buy correctly and have the right type of merchandise for your member, you in turn will reap extra profits which, possibly, you are not doing at present.

Make Them Quality-Wise

Many pros are sadly lacking in the art of buying merchandise. First of all, I think you should decide just what type of merchandise you should offer your membership. Personally I feel that if you have a private club (or even a municipal club) you should try to build your business quality-wise. To do this you should purchase merchandise that has been tried and proved. Not everyone appreciates quality, but those who are taught to appreciate it never want anything else.

Here is another sad fact regarding pros' buying habits. Many are afraid to buy in sufficient quantities when buying sportswear. It is true that you must know the buying capacity of your membership, but many times you can prove to be a very poor buyer by buying too little. That is just as bad as over-buying. I believe the secret of intelligent buying is this:



Recent visitors at Woodridge GC, Lisle, Ill., were this foursome returning to Canada. They stopped to inspect the No. 12 green at 6:30 a. m. and were snapped by Ted Hammerschmidt, Woodridge's mgr. and an early riser. Close inspection of photo shows that the visitors left their footprints in the morning dew.

If you feel a particular item will be a good seller, have enough confidence in it to buy enough so that you will have a good selection of sizes and colors available. This is another reason why I say you should let your assistant or your sales personnel get in on the buying. If a person selling the merchandise feels he can sell it, most of the time he will be successful. If he is not sold on the item himself, many times the merchandise will just sit on your shelves.

Here's A Tipoff

Having confidence in the salesman from whom you are buying is another very important phase in purchasing. Many salesmen can give you valuable information about their products which you, in turn, can pass on. Learn from these salesmen who call on you and from whom you are doing your buying. Most of the time a salesman tries to sell you merchandise which is selling at other clubs. A good salesman tries to discourage you from buying merchandise he feels you can not sell successfully. He would much rather have a successful item move out quickly so that he can sell you again. Remember, a good salesman is informative and has his customers' needs foremost in his mind at all times.

Roberts at Iowa State

Elliot C. Roberts, formerly of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, is now doing full time research on turf at Iowa State University. Most of his career has been spent in this work and he has been closely connected with golf courses.