

# Accent on management

By KEN EMERSON

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Change jobs!—That's what a club manager may have to do if he doesn't have what it takes to influence his members.

The only way a manager can motivate the members of his club to use their facilities and to participate in club activities is through the channels of communications he has established over the years. The wise manager takes advantage of every opportunity to devise new means of communicating and improving on old useful techniques.

The club executive who *stays* is the one who finds *ways*. Ways to get his membership to attend dances, luncheons, fashion shows or stags that should have succeeded last year—but proved otherwise.

You can analyze, study, review and evaluate until you know just what went wrong with the last club function. But, unless you can convince the members that the *next* one will be the one they *have to attend* your work will have been completely wasted.

Just what are the best channels of communication? Exactly how do you make sure that the members get the message? These are questions that have challenged club managers since the first club hired the first professional club administrator, back in 1796.

Here are several general rules that all successful managers follow:

1) Get attention!—Nothing is read until it's seen. The average club member is challenged by a daily deluge of mail and the club's flyer or news bulletin is only one of many competing for his attention.

Color attracts the eye. Use it—in envelopes, ink and paper stock. Put it to work for you in table tents, posters and in any displays.

2) Keep it simple!—Most of us look

for the line of least resistance; we're inclined to do the easy things first. Club members are no exception. Make it easy for them to read your communication.

Use short words, sentences, and paragraphs. Leave plenty of white space; keep away from complicated type faces and distracting design. Avoid passive passages, confusing words and faltering phrases.

3) Use your imagination!—Look for new ways to get your message across. Ideas like Shaker Heights Country Club's "Holiday Booklet," listing seasonal events; the "Evaluation Cards" that Fort Collins Country Club uses to get feedback on club events from their members are two excellent examples of this.

The oversize, permanent calendars that many clubs hang in their golf shops make ideal message boards, as do placemats, food checks and menus.

Show your members their patronage is appreciated. When was the last time you included a thank you note with the member's dues invoice, thanking him for using the club—and at the same time, reminding him about next month's stag?

Only two kinds of people like flattery, men and women, so don't forget the ladies. Make it a point to write a note thanking the hostess who had that party last night for using the club for her entertaining—and suggest she might want to reserve a table at the next dinner dance for another group.

4) Plan!—Don't wait until the last minute to announce a special event. Members plan their calendars weeks, even months in advance...the last minute flyer won't get many of these. Then too, it always looks just like what it is, a rush job!

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GOLFDOM

## Pro's Rule of Seven

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ladies' rental sets. Because of the increased enthusiasm for golf by the women players, we found that we were too many times short of these rentals. This was quickly remedied by purchasing 15 additional complete sets, five each from three different manufacturers.

7) **Profit and Loss** — Results, here, were good. Gross profits and net profits were up. However, in order that we not become complacent, we asked our auditing and legal departments to work closer and give us some additional guidance in the areas of current depreciation and taxation methods. This has been a real eye-opener for us.

We, therefore, cannot stress enough how important we feel that this year-end examination of the past season is in planning for the next. For us, it has paid off handsomely—in bigger profits, and better service to our members. ●

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In this day of packaged art and electronic stencils even the standard mimeograph machine can produce attractive, eye-catching messages. But you must plan ahead.

5) **Inspire!**—Use action verbs; good, colorful descriptive words and phrases. Avoid a static layout. Dull, uninspired headlines do not make people want to do things. Even the best writers seek new, unique ways to present their work.

The next time you begin to wonder whether the time and effort you've been putting in, trying to get the message across to the members has been worthwhile and the next time you think about packing your bag and moving on — remember this—it may be the message, not the member, that is at fault.

Take a look at *your message*. Are you really communicating with everyone the very best you can? ●

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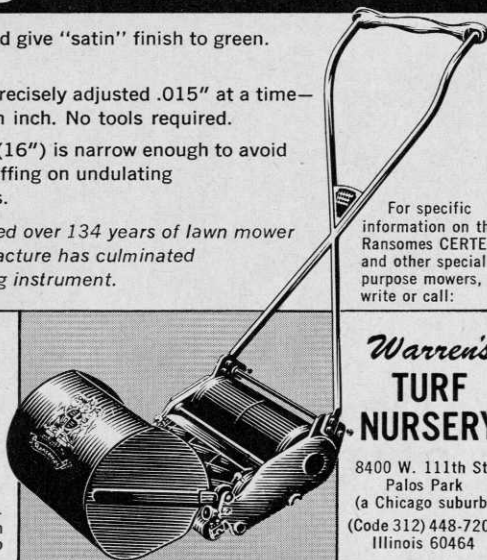
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