

## Idea file

### Golfer communication: put in suggestion box

Good public relations with your golfers is something that can be easily improved. Superintendents and pros in many facilities have put up suggestion boxes to get feedback on what their customers or members really want.

You could put up question blanks, along with the box, asking "Did you fully enjoy your game today?" or "What can we do to better serve you on the course and increase the enjoyment of your game?"

The box can easily be placed near the clubhouse entrance or in the locker room. You might even get some compliments.

### Changing your image is just in a name

What people think your operation is might not be what it actually is. If you are a daily fee operator, a matter of semantics may be costing you additional customers.

If your public operation has the name "club" attached to it, consider changing it to "course." Many daily fee golfers will pass up your facility, if they think it has anything to do with a private club.

After you make the initial change, make sure your listings in phone books and other directories are indicative of a public operation.

### In-house laundry saving you energy?

With the escalating cost of energy facing every facility, clubs with in-house laundry systems can do several things to decrease the cost of operation.

Try not to overheat the water that you use for washing. Attempt to regularly test water heater controls, adjusting or repairing those that overheat. Insulation should be checked on hot water storage tanks, pipes, and steam lines. Drain and flush hot water tanks twice a year, or more frequently if water contains impurities.

If your water is unusually hard, consider the installation of a water softener.

### Document problems, be a photographer

Course maintenance is a subject where the picture can truly substitute for many words. Recording the headaches that you meet on the course, and the subsequent success with which you tackle them, can all be documented by the camera.

After you leave your course for another position, the photographs you leave behind can be invaluable for the next superintendent. Such shots can help in the location of irrigation pipe, valves, or tile lines.

Eventually, you can utilize slides for the education of your crew and even in communicating problems better to your board or management.

### 'Rent-a-pro' answers small operation needs

Many small public courses and country clubs can not afford the full-time services of a PGA professional. There is a way, though, these facilities can get help in pro shop organization and the vital area of teaching.

When dealing with so many beginning golfers, as the smaller facilities do, the need for an accredited teacher is essential. Many facilities have recruited professionals from nearby courses and driving ranges to teach on a part-time basis.

This has been successful for many operations and gives the customer or member an opportunity to get some competent assistance with his or her game. The best way to go, though, is hire a full-time professional, if at all possible.

### Enforcing dress codes may take a reminder

Although times are changing at many clubs and the days of the strictly enforced dress standard are less stringent, those clubs that still maintain dress codes may employ some subtle suggestions to the members to maintain their rules.

A policy definition about the code can easily be placed in a separate mailer to the membership or in the club newsletter. This can state on which special occasions the code will be in effect and in which areas of the clubhouse certain attire is presentable.

This practice can clear the path to better communication with the membership and at the same time remind them of rules they promised to keep when they joined the club.