

**I**n any profession, whether it's golf course maintenance or journalism, I've always believed that being cool to people is half of what it takes to achieve success. It's all about the Golden Rule — do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

But being cool to people isn't always easy. We're human, and sometimes we look out for No. 1. Sometimes we don't treat others the way we want to be treated.

With that in mind, I've devised a list to help you (and me) manage people better and get along with co-workers. Let's call it the "Eight Rules for Being Cool to Fellow Employees." There are no trend-setting philosophies here. All of the rules are pretty basic. But sometimes we have to be reminded of the basics, especially when it's about treating others with dignity.

So, on to the list of rules:

## #1 Integrity Rules

Your integrity is the biggest strength you have going for you. It's especially important if you're a superintendent who's managing a crew. If you have integrity, your crew workers probably trust and respect you. Think about those two things — trust and respect — for a minute. Is there anything else more important when it comes to managing people? If your workers have trust and respect in you, everything else falls into place.

But the key here is that you have to *earn* their trust and respect by *building* your integrity. And this is one of those building jobs that's never finished.

## #2 Get Down and Dirty

You've got to love the superintendent who orders a worker to "grab a shovel and get in that ditch," and then the superintendent grabs a shovel himself and follows him. The action sends a Godzilla-sized message — that the boss doesn't place himself above the grunt work.

But don't believe for a minute you can do this once and your employees will think you're "in touch." Your employees are smart enough to realize single actions of such are

# The Eight Rules for Being Cool

BY LARRY AYLWARD



just for show. To be convincing, you have to get down and dirty often — and show that you like it.

## #3 Empower, Don't Manipulate

Do you delegate authority for the sake of others, or do you delegate authority for the sake of yourself?

The former consists of bosses who delegate authority with the idea of empowering their employees. These superintendents want their workers to learn and grow by taking on new responsibilities.

The latter consists of bosses who don't delegate authority as much as they delegate work. They do that because they don't like to work. They also could care less if their employees learn and grow — they just want to go home early.

## #4 A Time to Teach

As the superintendent, you may be viewed as the expert. Your employees look to you for guidance, so you need to take the time to teach them. *Show* them how to do something. Don't just tell them how to do it. Not only will they be better workers, they'll appreciate you for taking the time to teach.

## #5 Don't Strut Your Stuff

Don't brag about yourself and what a wonderful career you've had. Even if you helped stage a dozen U.S. Opens and have received the finest education in the world, don't spout off to your co-workers about how prominent you are. They don't want to hear it, and your arrogance is perceived as ignorance.

If you want to turn off your employees, just keep struttin' your self-perceived stuff. Soon you'll have no respect.

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## #6 Have Mercy

Everyone needs to feel compassion. So next time one of your crew members is having a bad day — even if the worker is 20 years younger than you and speaks a different language — show that person you care by asking what's troubling him or her. Try to help people with their problems as much as you can.

## #7 Befriend Them

Just because you're the boss doesn't mean you have to detach yourself from your workers' private lives. Know their names. Better yet, know their children's names, and ask them how their children are doing.



The key is that you have to earn their trust and respect by building your integrity. And this is one of those building jobs that's never finished.

## #8 Appreciate Them

Don't treat workers like robots. Tell them and show them how much you care about their efforts. Gather them round at the end of the work week and tell them that you're proud of them for doing a good job. Maybe you can show your gratitude by presenting them with \$25 or \$50 gift certificates to local stores or restaurants.

It's vital to let them *feel* appreciated.

Want to add a rule to *The Eight Rules for Being Cool*? Send an e-mail to Larry Aylward at [laylward@advanstar.com](mailto:laylward@advanstar.com).

In this issue, *Golfdom* focuses on managing people. For a series of stories on this topic, turn to page 28.

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