

I recently heard a definition of happiness that went like this: “If you want to be happy for an hour, take a nap. If you want to be happy for a day, go fishing. If you want to be happy for a week, take a vacation. If you want to be happy for a month, get married. If you want to be happy for a lifetime, be happy at what you do.”

Are you happy at what you do?

In July, I had the privilege to hear a keynote speech by motivational speaker Ken Futch at the Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association’s annual meeting. The title of this column is a shameless rip off of the title of Futch’s book, “Take Your Best Shot.”

How many keynote speakers have you heard who accidentally shot themselves in the head to jump start their way to success and happiness? It took a freak accident to make Futch consider how he was living his life. Then he wrote a book about it. Thanks to his insights, however, we don’t have to go through that trauma to learn how to turn situations into opportunities to raise our job satisfaction and happiness.

Now, I didn’t say it wouldn’t take preparation, perseverance and, yes, even some lucky timing once in awhile. But if you keep looking for opportunities to showcase your strengths and talents, you can improve your chances significantly.

I know most superintendents are decent, hard-working, honest and loyal stewards of a golf club’s assets. They pour their hearts and souls into their jobs. However, we’re often weakest in promoting and marketing ourselves on what we accomplish.

When Futch talks about turning situations into opportunities, he could be talking about golf’s current state, which offers myriad possibilities to do so. In that regard, below are some things to consider doing to make your club aware of what you know and do. You never know who will take notice and what doors may open up for you.

1. Negative local press and regulations concerning water, chemicals and fertilizers: Post a detailed bulletin on how you manage the irrigation

Are You Giving It Your Best Shot?

BY JOEL JACKSON



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of the course, discussing daily system checks, technology, upgrades, etc. Do the same for chemicals and fertilizers – calibrations, actual acreage treated, spot treatments, spoon-feeding, etc. Never hesitate to inform your members of your stewardship and safety practices that protect people and the environment.

2. Communications: Find out the most advantageous time at your club to be more visible. Is it the putting green on Saturday morning, during men’s or ladies’ days during the week, or some other time? Use that time to talk informally about what’s happening on the course. Take advantage of opportunities to play golf with board and committee members. Don’t get too social — keep it friendly but professional. Yes, this borders on club politics, but politics are inevitable. Don’t be an outsider when the going gets tough. Play golf with members when appropriate. Teachable moments will occur on the course.

3. Education: Provide constant and constructive feedback to crew members about performance, and the same to members and management about course conditions. Give nature and maintenance tours. Promote continuing education for you and the staff. Report back to members and management about what you learned that will be of value to the club. That goes for the Golf Industry Show and chapter meetings.

Taking advantage of opportunities that come our way is a learned process. But if you want to be successful and happy in life, isn’t it worth giving it your best shot?

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