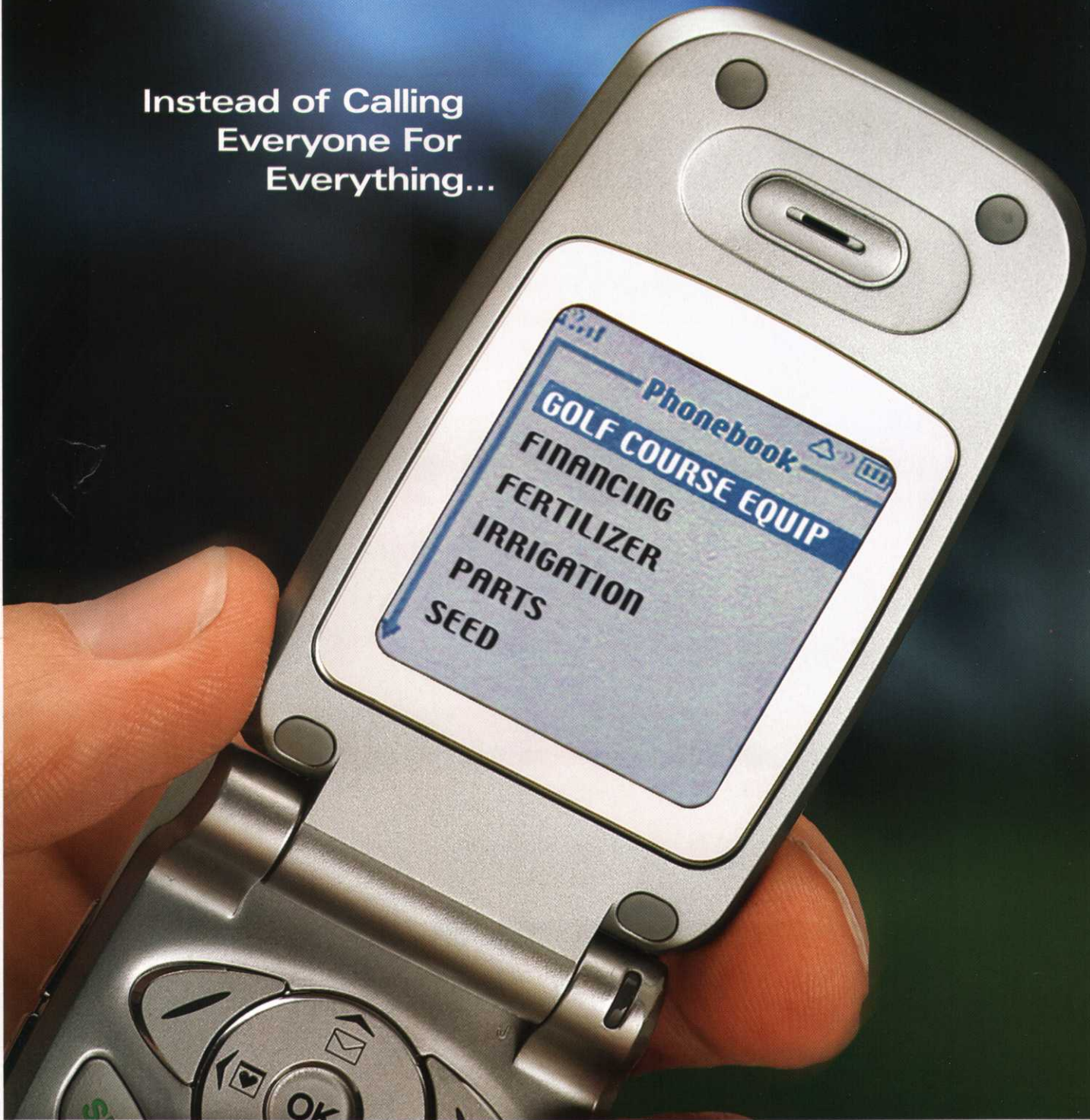
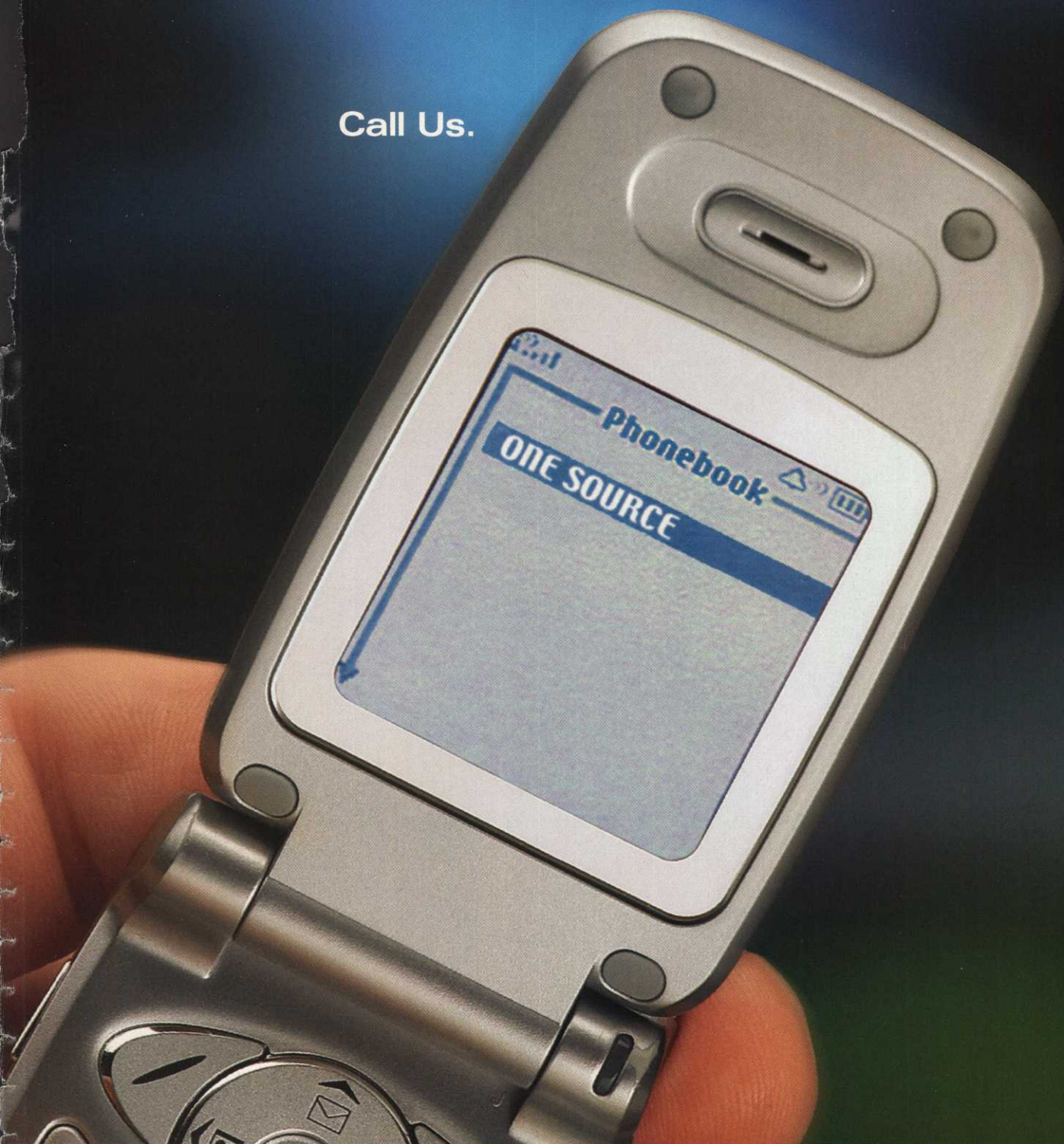


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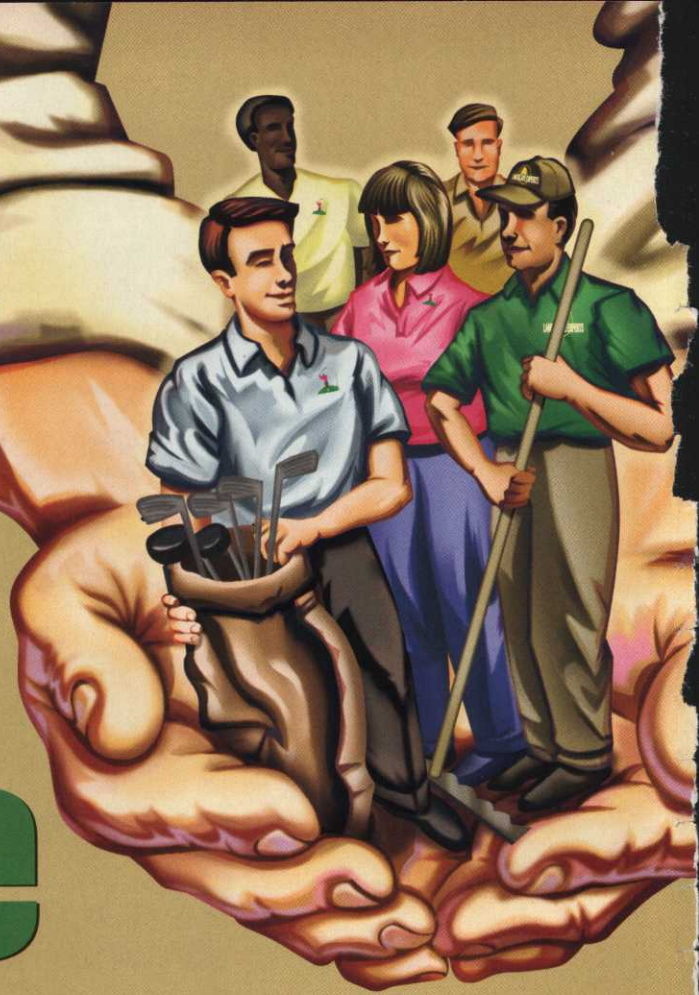
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Golfdom

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MANAGING People



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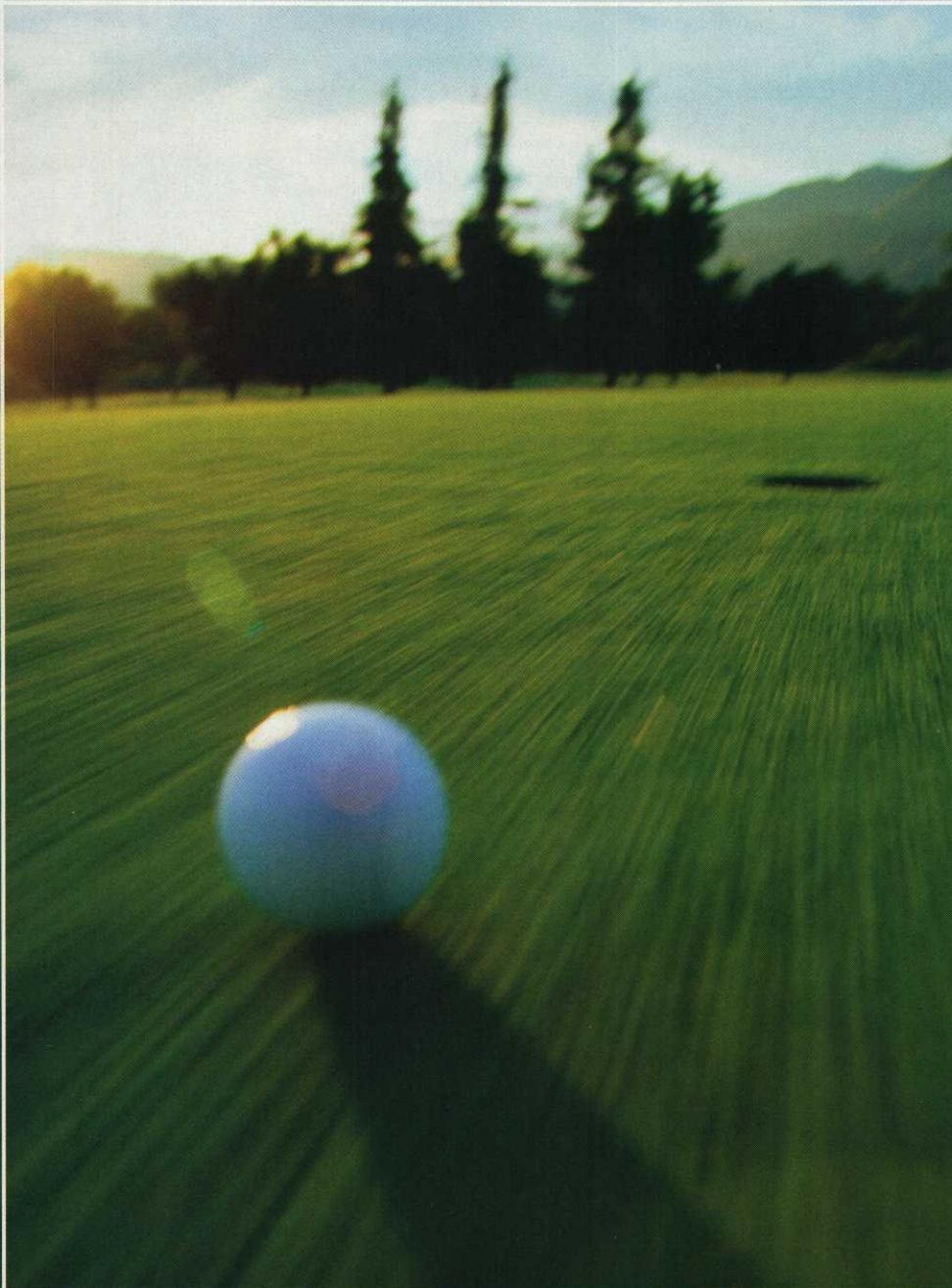


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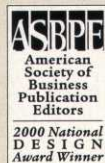


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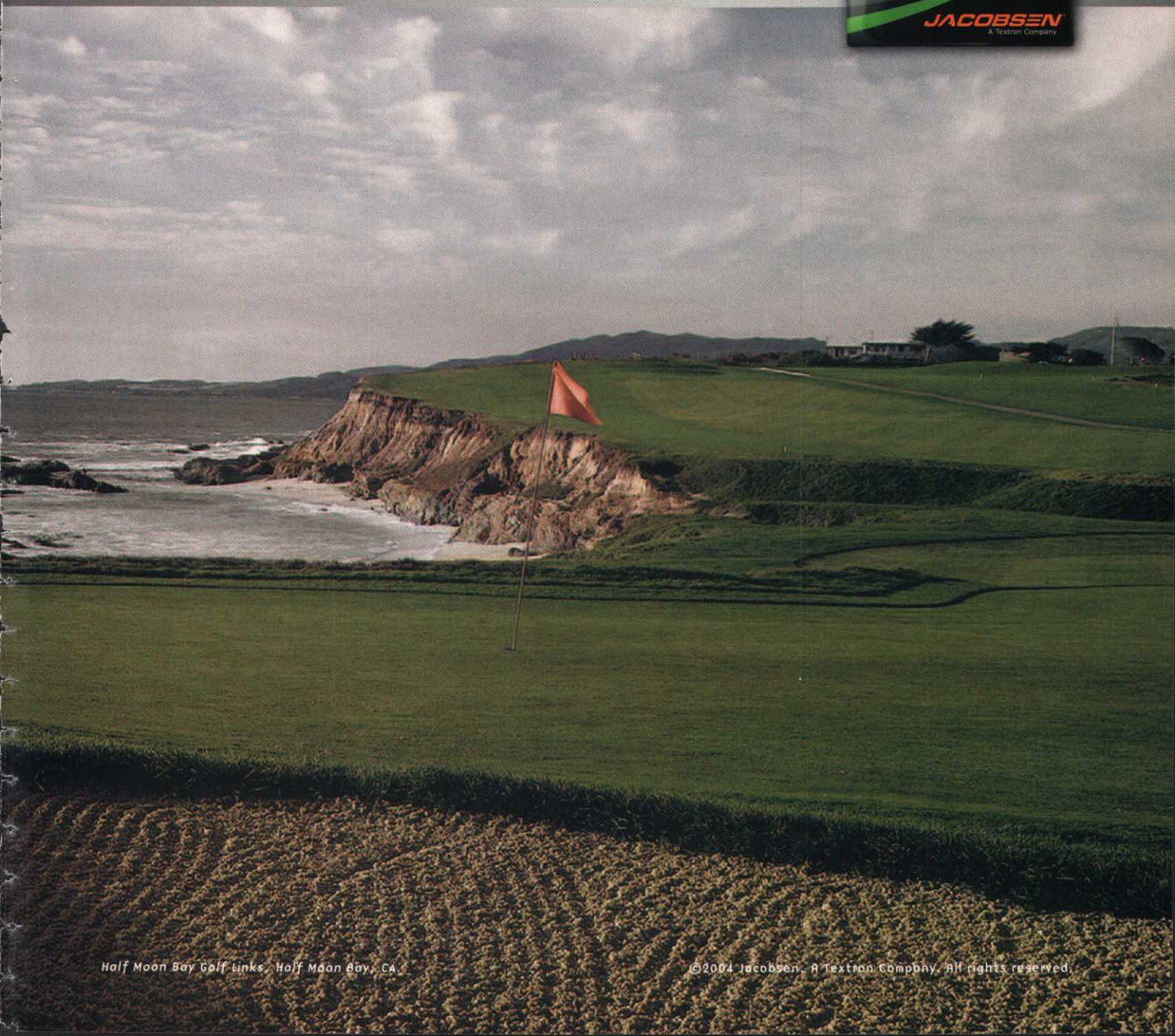
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I've lost count of the number of great superintendents I know who've finally thrown up their hands and given up the profession over the past few years.

For some, the physical and emotional demands of the job are too much. Two or three decades of uncertainty, long hours and lack of recognition will take their toll. For others who are forced by a new general manager or club president to "seek other opportunities," the daunting challenge of finding an equivalent position in one's 40s or 50s is more than they can stand. This drain of veteran expertise is a quiet crisis in our industry that will continue as long as superintendents remain in the underappreciated and overworked category.

For most who no longer wish to practice the art and science of greenkeeping, the prospect of moving to the private side — selling turf products to their former peers — is a tantalizing one.

The question facing these potential sales side recruits is whether the grass is really greener on the other side of the superintendent vs. salesperson fence. Here are a few observations on the matter gleaned from years of talking with those who've made that transition.

Get a life

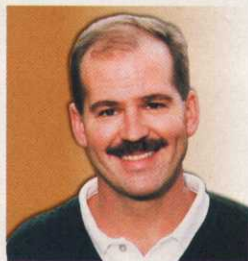
I'm fond of relating the highly illustrative story of a Pennsylvania superintendent I bumped into during a family weekend at a mountain resort a few years ago. After exchanging some pleasantries and introducing our families to each other, he pulled me aside and asked in a whisper, "You're not going to tell anybody I was away from my course on a Saturday during the season, are you?"

The most common thing you hear from the fence-jumper is, "Hey, I finally get weekends off and I'm starting to recognize my wife and kids again." There's no question that's a benefit. It's as if these folks have finally come up for air after being underwater for years. They feel they finally have a real life.

But it's not always an endless vacation on the sales side. The time demands of the course

Always Look Before You Leap

BY PAT JONES



I OCCASIONALLY
RUN INTO SALES
REPRESENTATIVES
WHO ARE PINING
FOR A RETURN TO
TURF MANAGEMENT.
HERE'S WHY

are to some extent replaced by the time demands of business. Those constant cell-phone calls from your crew or boss are replaced by constant cell-phone calls from customers who have urgent needs or problems.

Those weekends spent baby-sitting a sick pump station are replaced by weekends standing in trade-show booths at turf conferences or attending corporate sales meetings at the Cleveland Holiday Inn. In short, there's hard work, time demands and pressure on the sales side too ... they're just a little different.

Job security

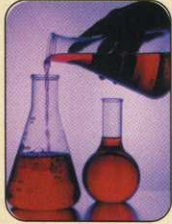
Another constant refrain from superintendents is, "They can fire me for nothing!" There's no question that horror stories like these are abundant. An influential member takes a dislike to a superintendent, works his or her way onto the club board and moves heaven and earth to fire him. It all adds up to getting fired for reasons beyond your control. It's unfair and it's short-sighted, but it is a possibility for every superintendent.

That never happens to salespeople, right? Well, on the other side of that fence, you have mergers, acquisitions, downsizing and bosses with ridiculous expectations (does that last part sound familiar?).

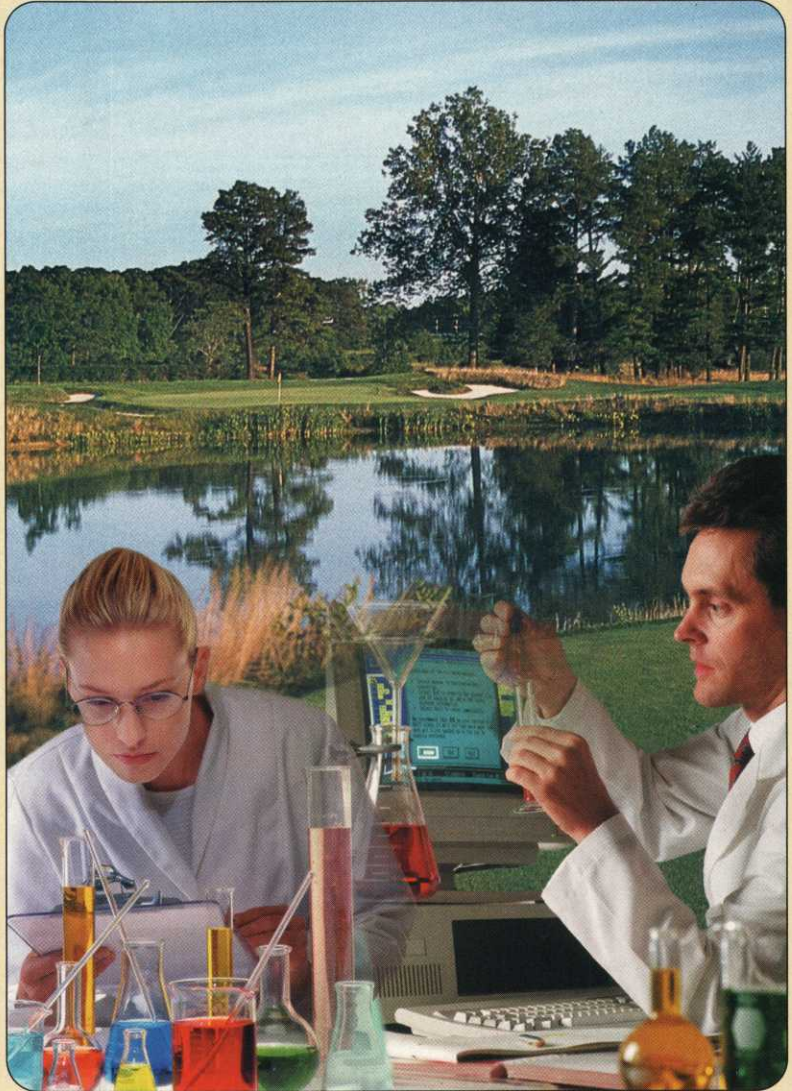
I occasionally run into sales representatives who are pining for a return to turf management. For them, it's easier to put the upsides of being turf managers — those beautiful sunrises on the course, satisfaction in a job well done — into perspective with the negatives. Always remember that before you take the leap over the fence.

Pat Jones, publisher of Golfdom, can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com.

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In 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



ALL OF THE RULES
ARE PRETTY BASIC
STUFF. BUT SOME-
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TO BE REMINDED
OF THE BASICS,
ESPECIALLY WHEN
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WITH DIGNITY

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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