



# Leaving Gracefully!

By **Brian Zimmerman**, Executive Director, Cleveland Metroparks, WGCSA President



What a time to be a sports fan in Cleveland. The Cleveland Cavaliers organization and the City of Cleveland were on edge until the decision was announced by the King himself on national television this past week. "I am taking my talents to South Beach." Now that "Lebron Gate" is in full swing here in Cleveland, I am reminded when Brett Farve left Green Bay after he

had long identified with the city and state.

I am wondering, how does this sports phenomena relate to the world we work in. When the decision is made to leave a current employer for "greener pastures" there is a proper and respectful way to accomplish this transition, and then there is the sports way of doing it. I thought to myself how I have handled this transition in my employment and how I have reacted being on the other side as a manager.

I think the topic of career moves is timely as the heat of the summer has kicked in, pump station and irrigation systems are being maxed out. Oh, and then there are the employees. Managing employees is an ever changing art. Here in Cleveland Metroparks I have 518 full time staff, 200 plus part time staff, and up to 800 seasonal

employees. I am blessed with a great Human Resources staff that handles 95 percent of the issues. Most golf courses unless they are part of a large cooperative environment have no true HR support. If you find yourself at a crossroads in your career here are a few tips that you may want to use as you are contemplating a career move.

One, you could compose a letter that could look like the following:

*Bill Smith Superintendent Slow Pace Golf Club*

*July 13, 2010*

*Dear Mr. Harrison*

*Please accept this as formal notice of my resignation from the position of Superintendent with the Slow Pace Golf Club.*

*In accordance with my contract of employment I am happy to continue to work until a time that can be mutually agreed upon.*

*While I believe that I am moving on for good reasons, I am sorry to leave, and I thank you for your support during my time with the golf course, which I have found enjoyable and fulfilling.*

*Please let me know the arrangements for handing over outstanding work and responsibilities.*

*Yours Sincerely,*


*Joe Grassman*

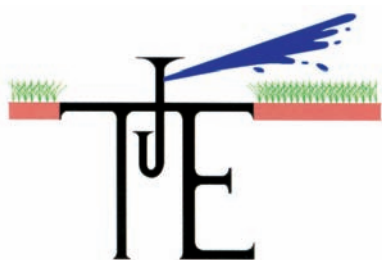
Two, make sure that your entire employee related benefits are in order. This could entail setting up a "cobra" insurance policy for you and your family, transfer of 401 K related saving plans, liquidating all available dollars in a flexible benefit account, maximizing vacation and sick leave payouts.

Three, work to schedule an exit interview with the employer. This can be a way to highlight some of the reasons for the transition.

Fourth, and maybe in my mind the most important there will be other jobs that you will apply for in your lifetime, what is the lasting impression you have made on them.

I truly believe there is a process to go through as one gets ready to leave employment. Leaving a job can be a positive transition for everyone involved. You have the power to ensure that leaving your current employer strengthens your relationship and reputation rather than destroy it.

Best of Luck though the rest of the golf season! Hang in there the snow season is right around the corner. 



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