



THE OFF-SEASON GAME PLAN

By Chad Eberhardt

Now that the season has come to an end, it's time to review the positives and negatives that you have encountered throughout the season. Quite often the negatives can be turned into very positive circumstances for next season.

One of the most important areas to focus on is the team itself.

When assembling next season's roster, it is important to honestly evaluate each individual's worth to your team.

Ideally, all the great team players that have ever worked for us would stay forever. Keep on dreaming!

The good ones tend to go on to become doctors, lawyers, and golf course coaches.

Why does it seem like the individuals that cause the most frustration are the ones that are the first to ask to be back? I'm sure it's because they recognize the positive working environment that has been established.

Unfortunately, they fail to see how much better things would be without them in the picture.

At times, weeding out the poor performers means losing someone with personal connections to you.

Besides the fact that you're helping improve your team, not asking an individual back might be doing that person a favor.

If handled properly, you might be able to help direct a released person into a different field or place of work that he'd be able to be successful in. Wouldn't it work out nice if he even stopped back in to say thanks somewhere down the line?

Anytime you lose an employee, it is important that you take the time and effort on their last day to shake hands and thank them for their help. Obviously, your level of appreciation will be based upon their worth to what you're trying to accomplish in the workplace.

Every year you'll need to find quality replacements who can make the transition from year to year as smooth as possible.

Start the recruiting process with referrals from your team members. Good team players tend to have good team players as friends.

Don't disqualify yourself from recruiting a person that you don't feel you can offer enough of a wage to.

Be persistent in the recruitment of the person by selling him on your team philosophy. Maybe you'll strike a chord with the person and be able to offer what that person wants in life other than just money.

Don't forget that you are trying to surround yourself with winners!

Don't be impulsive when hiring. Even though a friend or a relative receives rave reviews, you must check things out to avoid a "can't miss" label that bombs.

Rehiring a good team player who has left and then returns often works out. He might have left due to the greener grass elsewhere but noticed that not everyone shares your coaching philosophy in the workplace. Rehires can turn into your biggest assets.

When an employee is considering leaving for another job opportunity, you must speak with him before he's made up his mind. Find out the reason for possibly leaving and then determine if there's anything that can be done to rectify the situation.

Money tends to be the most convenient excuse for leaving.

Don't waste your time getting into a bidding war. Sell the employee on the fact that he is a valuable part of your team and that you sincerely care for him and respect his work.

Always put the team ahead of an individual and things will work out just fine in the end.

For this past year, I have attempted to formulate a coaching plan in this column that can be adopted as a management style for **any** golf course superintendent.

Whether you agree with me is up to you.

I am convinced that a workable coaching plan can be instituted by **any** superintendent in **all** circumstances.

After all, my plan is based upon simple, usable, and common-sense ideas that are shared by each and every successful coach that I've ever been coached by or studied.

It sure seems logical to me to directly incorporate any lessons learned from teamwork on the playing field into one's own personnel management style.

By the way, which sounds better? "How's it going... Coach?" or "How's it going... Superintendent?"

You make the call... Coach! 🌱



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